Sept. 7, 1987

THE NEW YORKER

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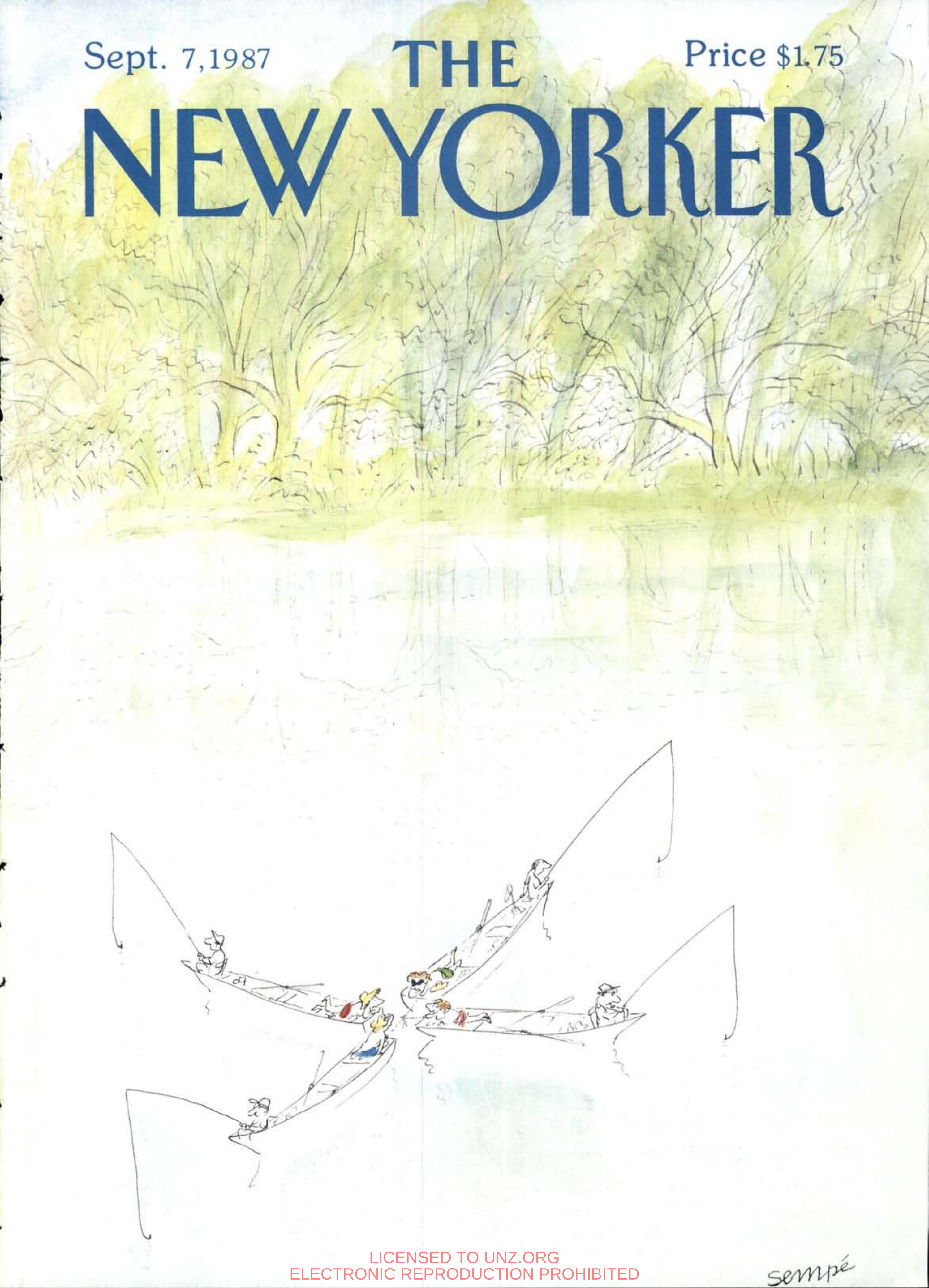

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Broadway Bound—A touching and unexpectedly serious study of a family—presumably the playwright's—as it begins to fall apart in Brooklyn in the nineteen-forties. Neil Simon retains his accustomed skill at comedy but has wisely suppressed his weakness for surefire gags. Gene Saks directed. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/15/86.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Bunker Reveries—A self-described "fantasy" on Watergate, with Ralph Waite as the disgraced ex-Attorney General and Robert Stattel as the disgraced ex-President. David Shaber is the author of the competent, if lacklustre, script, which, though well performed, is not for one moment as fascinating or exciting or dramatic as the real thing was. The good supporting company includes Patricia Elliott, Sheila MacRae, and, best of all, Richard Backus, as the former President's quiet son-in-law. (8/31/87) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Sept. 6.)

Dreamgirls—A revival of Michael Bennett's 1981 musical. Tom Eyen wrote the book and lyrics, and Henry Krieger wrote the music. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Driving Miss Daisy—Alfred Uhry's play is more a sentimental than a dramatic occasion, which tells, in a series of brief scenes, of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. What gives the evening distinction is the performance—the fine acting of Dana Ivey and Morgan Freeman, under Ron Lagomarsino's direction. (4/27/87) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Fences—August Wilson's play about a black garbageman, formerly a baseball player of professional calibre, is as powerful as, and even richer than, his "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom." The triumphant performance, with James Earl Jones in the leading role, supported by Mary Alice, Courtney B. Vance, Frankie R. Faison, Ray Aranha, Charles Brown, and Karima Miller, was directed by Lloyd Richards. (4/6/87) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Happy Days—A revival of the Beckett play, starring Aideen O'Kelly. Previews Wednesday, Sept. 2. Opens officially on Thursday, Sept. 3. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Jackie Mason's "The World According to Me!"—Jackie Mason's material consists almost entirely of outrageous insults addressed to Jews, Italians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, and Wasps. For more than thirty years, Mason's audiences—that is, his victims—have found him hilarious, and the sorry truth of the matter is that he *is* hilarious. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinée Saturday, Sept. 12, at 2.)

Les Liaisons Dangereuses—An exquisite production by the Royal Shakespeare Company of Christopher Hampton's adaptation of the scandalous 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos. With fine performances by Alan Rickman, Lindsay Duncan, Suzanne Burden, and Lucy Aston in the leading roles. Howard Davies was the deft director. (5/11/87) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 6.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting **give my regards to broadway**, a musical loosely adapted by Raymond Allen, Jerry Gotham, and Todd Ellison from George M. Cohan's "Little Johnny Jones." (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

Les Misérables—Colm Wilkinson is a strong Jean Valjean and Terrence Mann is his strong pursuer Javert in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, which comes to us from France by way of England. The real standouts of the producton, however, are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. But even these, remarkable though they are, are not sustaining enough for the three and a half hours that the show runs. (3/23/87) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinée Labor Day at 2:30.)

Moms—A celebration of the great black comedienne Moms Mabley, as impersonated by Clarice Taylor. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Negro Ensemble Company—A revival of Trevor Rhone's 1985 farce **two can play**, with Hazel Medina and Sullivan H. Walker. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2; Saturdays at 3; and Sundays at 2:30.)

The Nerd—This farce by the late Larry Shue (author of "The Foreigner") is a source of laughter from beginning to end. It tells the story of an idiotic young man who almost becomes the permanent house guest of an inoffensive architect. Robert Joy gives a first-rate comic performance in the title role. (4/6/87) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Psycho Beach Party—This romp through early-sixties beach-blanket movies, written by Charles Busch—and significantly funnier

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than Mr. Busch's earlier work—uses the conventions of drag comedy to lampoon the mores and assumptions of heterosexual behavior. The production—which stars Mr. Busch as a Gidget-like figure with a Marnie-like problem—is directed by Kenneth Elliott and includes a dance number that may single-handedly bring back the limbo. (8/10/87) (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

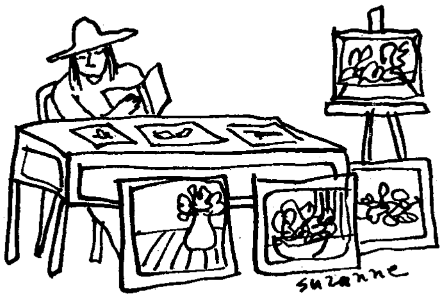
Sherlock's Last Case—A relentlessly jokey entry in the Baker Street files that is more tiresome than funny. Frank Langella is Holmes, Donal Donnelly is Watson. (8/31/87) (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Starlight Express—A bore on roller skates. (3/30/87) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Steel Magnolias—The setting of this first play by Robert Harling is a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and much of the content is the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. A rather pathetic story is told, as well. The performances are good, especially those of Betsy Aidem, Rosemary Prinz, and Kate Wilkinson. The impressive setting was designed by Edward T. Gianfrancesco; Pamela Berlin directed. (8/17/87) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Talk Radio—The gifted Eric Bogosian appears in a strong and funny play of his own as the scornful host of a phone-in radio talk show. *Larry Pine will replace Mr. Bogosian starting* on Tuesday, Sept. 8. (6/8/87) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn a pleasantly sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Sept. 20.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **COASTAL DISTURBANCES:** Tina Howe's funny and beautiful play about love is set on a private beach on Massachusetts' North Shore. Carole Rothman was the director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,384 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Jack Klugman and Ossie Davis. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties, with Jim Dale in the starring role. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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DANCE

Lillo Way Dance Company—"Boundary: White" (première), "Quintet with Chairs and Cigarettes" (New York première), "I Am Rose and Other Songs," and "Remember When." (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 10-12, at 8. For information about tickets, call 924-0077.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A long, narrow, nautical bar, restaurant, and jazz haunt. Drummer **MEL LEWIS** will be here with his trio on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12. (This establishment, like many others around town, labors under the city's 1926 cabaret law, the chief provision of which prohibits clubs without hard-to-get cabaret licenses from presenting groups larger than trios.) Other threesomes can be heard during the rest of the week. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **JIM MORRIS** is a thirty-year-old comedian-impressionist. His first impression, he says, was of a New Jersey uncle who chewed his food funny. For the past six or seven years, he's been picking on Ronald Reagan. Morris's Reagan holds a press conference here at nine through Saturday, Sept. 5. You can pretend to be a reporter and ask him a question, and he will sing you a song from the good old days or do a soft-shoe or relay the information that is being transmitted to him through his hearing aid.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. Brazilian keyboardist and singer **TANIA MARIA** leads her group through Sunday, Sept. 6; saxophonist Joe Roccisano's big band holds forth on Monday, Sept. 7; and on Tuesday, Sept. 8, bassist **RAY BROWN** comes in with a trio that features pianist **GENE HARRIS**. Music after nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A vast pillared emporium that caters to various musical tastes and that accommodates people who like to stop having fun at ten-thirty or eleven as well as the conventional types who don't like to start until then. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 4-5, the British folk band Steeleye Span; Friday, Sept. 11, **TAJ MAHAL**; and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12-13, British jazz-rock guitarist Allan Holdsworth. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists and bassists and, occasionally, horn players. **GEORGE COLEMAN**, a square-jawed, hard-bop tenor man, works with pianist **JOHN HICKS** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** through Monday, Sept. 7; on Tuesday, Sept. 8, pianist **RONNIE MATHEWS** and bassist **SANTI DEBRIANO** begin a six-night visit. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. The members of the decade-old **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET**—altoists **JULIUS HEMPHILL** and **OLIVER LAKE**, tenorist **DAVID MURRAY**, and baritone **HAMIET BLUIETT**—sometimes turn up in white tuxes, looking like moonlighters from a fancy swing orchestra. (On their most recent record, they play seven Ellington and Strayhorn tunes, some of them so silkily that they almost sound as if they had seceded from the avant-garde altogether.) The W.S.Q. performs here through Sunday, Sept. 6. On Tuesday, Sept. 8, **OLU DARA**, a Mississippi native who plays sweet-toned riverboat cornet and sings raunchy blues of his own devising, brings in a quintet. Mondays are set aside for the father-and-son guitar team of **BUCKY** and **JOHN PIZZARELLI**. Music from nine every night but Monday, when it begins at eight. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Pianist Frank Owens is on duty in the Bemelmans Bar from nine-thirty Mondays through Fridays. Closed Labor Day.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make out-of-body travel possible. Azimuth, a British trio (trumpeter **KENNY WHEELER**, pianist John Taylor, and vocalist Norma Winstone) that plays a kind of impressionistic cloudland jazz, trades sets with guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE'S** threesome through Sunday, Sept. 6. Belgian guitarist, harmonica whiz, and whistler **TOOTS THIELEMANS** moves in with his quartet on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL**. Music from eight every night but Monday, when it begins at nine. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Only slightly smaller than an airplane hangar but considerably fancier. On clear nights, the piano, situated in a grove of palms in the south-central region of the dining room, is visible from the bar. The schedule: Wednes-

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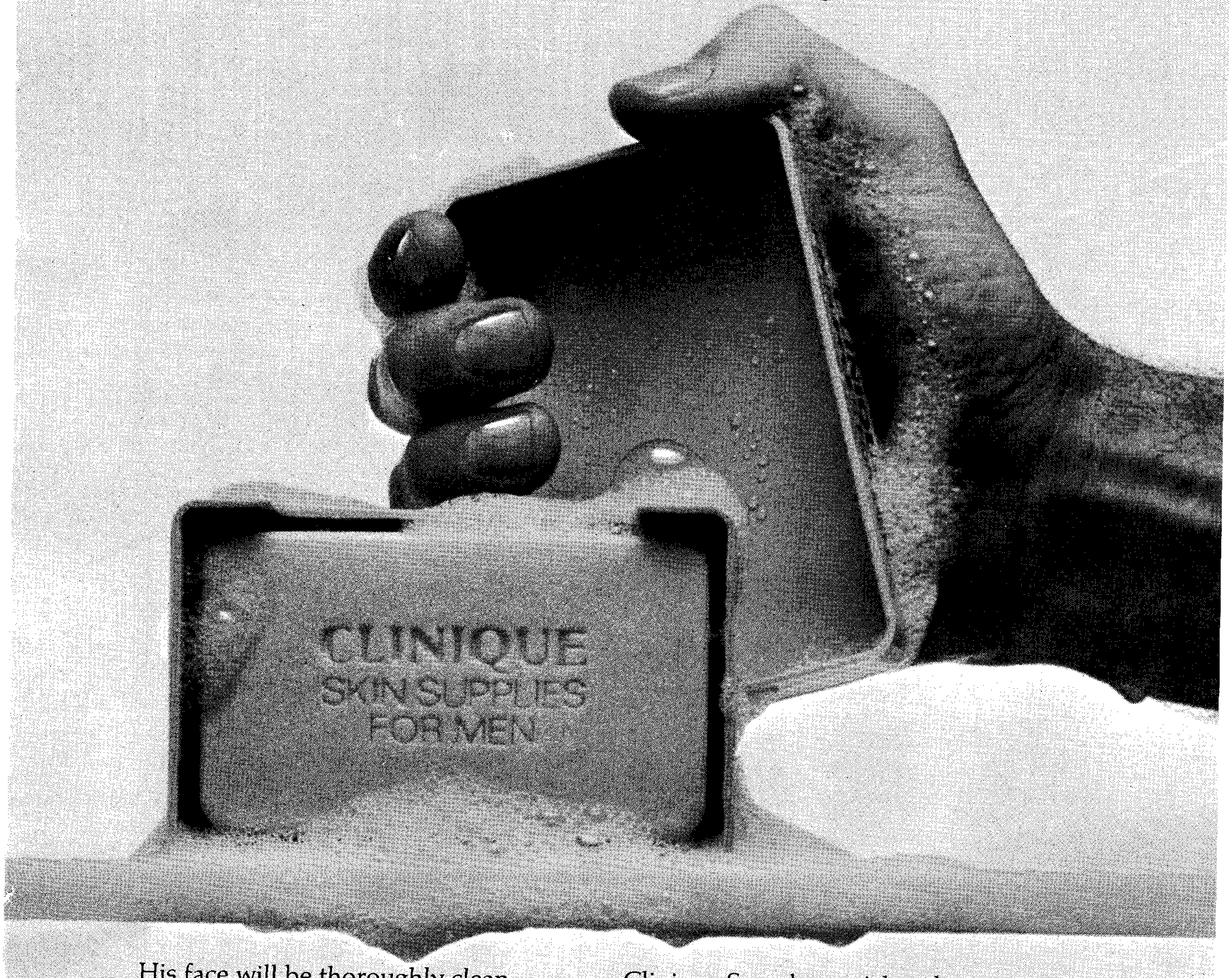

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CLINIQUE
SKIN SUPPLIES FOR MEN

day and Thursday, Sept. 2-3, Lynn Bernstein; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 4-5, **DANNY MIXON**; and starting Tuesday, Sept. 8, **VLADIMIR SHAFRANOV**. Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Sunday and Monday, Sept. 6-7.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—A small, dark bar with ancient marching-band instruments on the walls, Art Tatum and Earl Hines on the jukebox, and an upright piano that seats four (not counting the pianist).The next six nights (through Monday, Sept. 7) belong to singer-pianist **BOB DOROUGH**, a ponytailed, twangy-voiced, scat-a-lot hipster whose repertoire includes "I'm Old Fashioned," "Moon River," Dave Frishberg's "Sweet Kentucky Ham," a couple of numbers he wrote with the London-based lyricist Fran Landesman ("She sends me the lyrics, I send her the melody; sometimes we have a song, sometimes we have an argument"), and Charlie Parker's "Yardbird Suite" (for which he wrote lyrics). His longtime sidekick **BILL TAKAS** is on bass. Tuesdays are reserved for guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. Music from ten.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **JAMES WILLIAMS**, a Memphis-born pianist and former Jazz Messenger, works with bassist and fellow-Memphian **JAMIL NASSER** through Saturday, Sept. 5; **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CECIL MC BEE** take charge on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Harry Connick, Jr., flies all by himself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Probably the only place in town that features avant-garde jazz, Breathe Easy medicinal tea, homemade yogurt, and smoothies. The schedule: Wednesday, Sept. 2, Greg Bendian at nine and avant-rock guitarist **FRED FRITH** and Ikue Mori at eleven; Thursday, Sept. 3, violinist **BILLY BANG**, solo at nine and with his band at eleven; Friday, Sept. 4, **TIREZ TIREZ**, a downtown duo led by Mikel Rouse (guitar, synthesizer, drum machine, David Byrne-ish vocals) that plays streamlined minimalist rock; Saturday, Sept. 5, Tony Bird; Wednesday, Sept. 9, at eleven, alto saxophonist **TIM BERNE'S** trio; Thursday, Sept. 10, at eleven, multi-instrumentalist **ELLIOTT SHARP** and percussionist Takashi Kazamaki; Friday, Sept. 11, Hugo Largo, a percussion-less, sombre rock quartet that likes molasses tempos; and Saturday, Sept. 12, cornettist **BUTCH MORRIS**, keyboardist **WAYNE HORVITZ**, and others. Music after nine.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." *Big it ain't, but it does feature* some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is blocked by a cowboy or a structural element). Wednesday, Sept. 2, blues guitarist Roy Buchanan; Thursday, Sept. 3, the New England jump-blues band **ROOMFUL OF BLUES**; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 4-5, Louisiana swamp rocker **DR. JOHN** and Anson & the Rockets; Sunday, Sept. 6, Motown saxophonist **JUNIOR WALKER**; Tuesday, Sept. 8, Cookie Watkins and Hege V; Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 9-10, **JORMA KAUKONEN** and **RICK DANKO**; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12, **LEVON HELM'S** band, with Springsteen drummer Max Weinberg. Music after nine. Hot vittles. Closed Labor Day.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Unicorns and lions on the walls, well-heeled *cats on the banquettes, and the fourteen*-piece Great American Swing Band on the dais. The orchestra, which is directed by clarinettist Walt Levinsky and includes **FRANK WESS** (reeds), **URBIE GREEN** (trombone), **WARREN VACHÉ** (cornet), and **RANDY SANDKE** (trumpet), is concentrating on Benny Goodman charts. Shows at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Mondays after nine-thirty, Woody Allen is likely to turn up to play clarinet with the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Orchestra. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. Wednesday, Sept. 2, **TODD RUNDGREN**; Friday, Sept. 4, **LIVING COLOUR**, with **VERNON REID**; Saturday, Sept. 5, GBH and the Accused; Thursday and Friday, Sept. 10-11, the **RAMONES**; and Saturday, Sept. 12, Urban Blight. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

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SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African all-percussion ensembles, reggae outfits, out-there American jazz bands, and salsa groups all pass through this former luncheonette. Wednesday, Sept. 2, Cuban percussionist **MONGO SANTAMARIA** and his band; Friday through Sunday, Sept. 4-6, samba composer and singer **MARTINHO DA VILA**; Tuesday, Sept. 8, the calypso singer **MIGHTY SPARROW**; Wednesday, Sept. 9, King David Rudder, a soca (or soul-calypso) singer, with Charlie's Roots Orchestra; Thursday, Sept 10, Byron Lee & the Dragonaires; and Friday, Sept. 11, the Haitian band **TABOU COMBO**. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial knotty-pine-and-brick-walled jazz room. **HAROLD LAND**, a West Coast tenor saxophonist who first came to notice with the Clifford Brown–Max Roach quintet of the mid-fifties, leads a veteran hard-bop sextet (**CEDAR WALTON** is on piano and **CURTIS FULLER** on trombone) called the Timeless All-Stars (Timeless is the name of a Dutch label for which they've recorded) through Sunday, Sept. 6. **PHIL WOODS**, a hard-blowing alto saxophonist underneath his jaunty little leather cap, comes in with his fine quintet on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Shows from about ten. Dining.

SWEETWATERS, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—A sleek, multitiered jazz and soul room. The Toys, a Queens girl group that flourished in the mid-sixties, perform through *Saturday, Sept. 5; Sarah Dash, an original* member of the long-running soul trio Labelle (a.k.a. Patti LaBelle & the Blue Belles), sings here starting Tuesday, Sept. 8. Music from nine. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—"Irish" is what the canopy above the entrance to this bar says, but rock and roll is what the boys and girls in the back room mainly do. Weekends are generally reserved for blues people, and on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 4-5, Texas-trained guitarist and singer **JOHNNY COPELAND** will minister to the faithful. **VALERIE WELLINGTON**, a young conservatory-trained singer from Chicago whose voice is as big as a house, brings in her band on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12. Shows after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Monday nights in the gym-size downstairs room are reserved for salsa bands and their whistling, clapping, table-drumming fans. On Sept. 7, **LEON THOMAS** will sing and yodel with orchestras led by Cheo Feliciano and the Venezuelan singer **OSCAR D'LEON**. Music from nine-thirty. **SUN RA** will be here in his flowing robes and sequinned space-traveller's hat for three nights starting Friday, Sept. 4, taking his **COSMIC ARKESTRA** through Fletcher Henderson numbers, free-jazz scrambles, and whatever else pops into his head. . . . ¶ One flight up in the Terrace Bar, you can listen to the piano-bass team of **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** through Sunday, Sept. 6, and to **KENNY BARRON** and **LARRY RIDLEY** starting Tuesday, Sept. 8. Every Tuesday, the visiting duo trades sets with jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio. Music from ten.

Music Hall
RADIO CITY
ON STAGE FEATURING THE ROCKETTES NO
Waitzman

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **DON CHERRY**—thin, bony-faced, spiky-haired, and a dresser no less sharp than his confrere Ornette Coleman—will be here with his pocket trumpet (with which he sometimes constructs fleeting, miniature melodies), his twanging African hunter's harp, and three colleagues (alto saxophonist **CARLOS WARD**, bassist **CAMERON BROWN**, and drummer **ED BLACKWELL**) through Sunday, Sept. 6. On Tuesday, Sept. 8, tenor saxophonist **AL COHN** and guitarist **MUNDELL LOWE** arrive with their quartet. On Mondays, the foreman of the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA** settles in behind his Pearl drums and Istanbul cymbals and lets *his crew rip. Music from ten.*

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a non-institutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and live jazz. Pianist Roy Meriwether leads a trio through Sunday, Sept. 6, and on Wednesday, Sept. 9, **DAKOTA STATON** comes in for five nights to sing some blues and ballads. On Mondays, comedians stand up and fall down. Shows from about nine. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. **TAL FARLOW**, a stirring guitarist whether he's playing at breakneck bebop speed or at a more relaxed gait, works with bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI** nightly except Sundays and Labor Day. Music from eight. Closed Sundays and Labor Day.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

DAVID BOWIE—Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 8.

JOE WALSH—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 8.

L. L. COOL J AND WHODINI—Madison Square Garden. Thursday, Sept. 3, at 7:30.

ALISON MOYET—Beacon Theatre. Thursday, Sept. 3, at 8.

SALSA FESTIVAL—Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, El Gran Combo, and others. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday, Sept. 5, at 8.)

ROGER WHITTAKER—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 8.

WHITNEY HOUSTON—With Kenny G. (Madison Square Garden. Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 8-9, at 8.)

FRANK SINATRA—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Saturday, Sept. 19. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 10-12, at 8.)

TRIBUTE TO CANNONBALL ADDERLEY—With the Nat Adderley quintet and the Blackman Brothers. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, Sept. 12, at 8.)

GREENWICH HOUSE—Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 8: The Walter Thompson Big Band. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 3, at 8: Fred Fried. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 4, at 8: Steve Cohn, with Fred Hopkins and Thurman Barker. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 5, at 8: The Santi Debriano quintet. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 6, at 8: Dino Betti van der Noot. (27 Barrow St. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Labor Day.)

GALLERIES

MAX COLE / JUNKO YODA—Canvases with horizontal stripes that, on close inspection, reveal within them fine freehand vertical lines. / Painted paper wall constructions with allover textures and patterns. Through Sept. 19. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Saturday, Sept. 12.)

Alexandre Hogue / Janet Monafo—Recent works on paper and paintings of the Southwest. Through Sept. 26. / Pastels of still-life subjects. Starts Thursday, Sept. 3. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Saturdays.)

Isabel McIlvain—Cast-bronze figures and wall reliefs. Through Sept. 30. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. Open Saturday, Sept. 12.)

Pam Steele—Mixed-metal wall constructions that have been treated with acid to create various patinas. Through Sept. 26. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Open Saturdays.)

Group Show—Bill Jensen, Alan Cote, Ronald Bladen, and Ilya Bolotowsky are each represented by a large- and a small-scale work. Through Sept. 26. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

David Graham—Color prints of American people and landscapes, including a souvenir vender, a mobile-home park, and a young boy standing in a yard next to a life-size statue of Jesus. Through Sept. 19. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. Open Saturday, Sept. 12.)

Cindy Sherman—The Whitney Museum has a ten-year survey of her photographs. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

German Photography of the Eighties—About a hundred prints by fourteen artists who have eschewed the documentary tradition in photography; their works fall into three categories: symbolic, representational, and experimental. Through Sunday, Sept. 6. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.) . . . **note:** A show of black-and-white prints by Bill Burke, of Southeast Asia in the early eighties, is also on view.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Dance" is the title of the Costume Institute's show of men's and women's evening dress and accessories. Through Sunday, Sept. 6. . . . ¶ The rooftop sculpture garden (all twentieth-century works) is open through Nov. 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

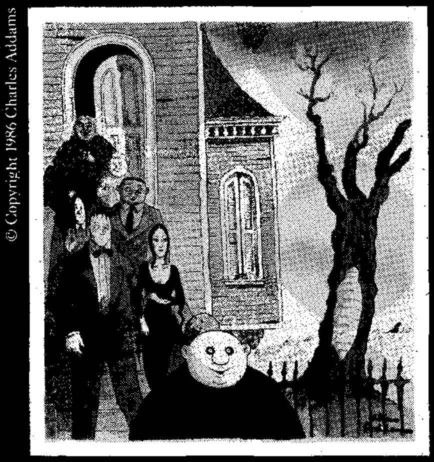
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Berlinart" covers paintings, plus photographs and handmade books, by artists (German and otherwise) who have been part of the Berlin art world in the past twenty-five years. Georg Baselitz, Markus Lüpertz, Rainer Fetting, Eva-Maria Schön, Jonathan Borofsky, William Eggleston, and others. Through Tuesday, Sept. 8. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by the Italian industrial designer Mario Bellini, including computers, calculators, chairs, and lamps. Through Sept. 15. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of paintings, photographs, installations, and sculptures which highlights the museum's past nine annual exhibits of works by emerging artists. Barbara Kruger, Rex Lau, Nic Nicosia, and Enzo Cucchi are among the fifty-one artists represented. Through Oct. 25. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A large-scale exhibition of high-spirited sculptural tableaux by Red Grooms, including "City of Chicago," "Ruckus Manhattan," and "Ruckus Rodeo." Also, paintings, drawings, and prints. Through Oct. 18. . . . ¶ A show of Cindy Sherman's photographs dating from 1977 to the present. Through Oct. 4. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Paintings by twenty artists whose studios are in Brooklyn. Roxi Marsen, Dan Rice, George McNeil, and Irene Lipton are among them. Through

THE ART OF
THE NEW YORKER
A 60 YEAR RETROSPECTIVE



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"We're On Our Way To The New Yorker Art Show"

July 27th through September 25th
The High Museum at Georgia-Pacific Center
133 Peachtree Street, N.E.
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NEW YORK · DETROIT · BOSTON ·
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WASHINGTON · LONDON · TORONTO

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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Monday, Sept. 7. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—The museum's vast permanent collection of things old (fossils, skeletons, relics) is the main attraction just now. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A two-part exhibit of ceramics, with pieces by winners of the twenty-seventh national ceramics competition and by artists who influenced them, such as Mary Frank, Peter Voulkos, and Robert Arneson. Through Oct. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—An exhibit surveying three thousand years of Chinese celadons, a family of ceramics that reached its peak in the hands of Sung-dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) artisans, who perfected the jadelike texture of the glaze. Bells, funerary urns, covered boxes, ewers, vases, and bottles—nearly ninety works in all. Through Sunday, Sept. 6. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A show of decorative arts centering on the Parisian entrepreneur and Art Nouveau booster Siegfried Bing (1838-1905). The objects on display—painted porcelains by Edouard Vuillard, wall coverings by William Morris, prints by Edvard Munch—were among those seen in Bing's shop and workshop at 22 Rue de Provence. Through Oct. 11. . . . ¶ An exhibit of drawings done by the eighteenth-century Scottish architect Robert Adam for Kedleston Hall, a Neo-Palladian mansion in Derbyshire, which is considered his crowning achievement. Through Sept. 20. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of eighteenth-century drawings of Florence and other areas of Tuscany by Giuseppe Zocchi. Through Sept. 27. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Schomburg Center, 515 Lenox Ave., at 135th St.—"Marcus Garvey: The Centennial Exhibition" documents (with photographs, manuscripts, paintings, and memorabilia) the life of this early champion of black nationalism. (Open Mondays, except Labor Day, through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—John Jesurun's theatre-video production "Shatterhand Massacree–Riderless Horse," Wednesday through Sunday, Sept. 9-13, at 8:30. Through Sept. 19.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Carmelita Tropicana's multi-media production "Memories of the Revolution," Friday, Sept. 11, at 10, and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12-13, at 8. Through Oct. 4.

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Shea Stadium is 1-718 507-8499, and for Yankee Stadium 293-6000.)

Baseball—**yankees** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Oakland, Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 7:30. . . . ¶ California, Friday, Sept. 4, at 7:30, and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 5-6, at 1:30. . . . **mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Philadelphia, Monday through Wednesday, Sept. 7-9, at 7:35. . . . ¶ St. Louis, Friday, Sept. 11, at 7:35, and Saturday, Sept. 12, at 2:20.

Racing—At **belmont:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, Oct. 19. The Gazelle Handicap, Wednesday, Sept. 2; the Woodward, Saturday, Sept. 5; the Manhattan Handicap, Sunday, Sept. 6; the Jerome Handicap, Monday, Sept. 7; and the Maskette, Saturday, Sept. 12. . . . **meadowlands:** Saturday, Sept. 5, at 8; Monday, Sept. 7, at 1:30; and Tuesday through Saturday, Sept. 8-12, at 7:30. . . . **monmouth park,** Oceanport, N.J.: *Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 2-3, and Saturday,* Sept. 5, at 1:30; Friday, Sept. 4, at 3. . . . **atlantic city race course,** McKee City, N.J.: Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 2-5, at 7.

Tennis—United States Open Championships. (U.S.T.A. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadow. Wednesday, Sept. 2, through Thursday, Sept. 10, at 11 and 7:30; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12, at 11; and Sunday, Sept. 13, at noon. For information about tickets, call 1-718 271-5100.)

Trotting—At **roosevelt raceway:** Nightly at 7:30; through Wednesday, Oct. 14. . . . **saratoga raceway,** Saratoga Springs: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:45, and Labor Day at 1:15; through Saturday, Nov. 21.

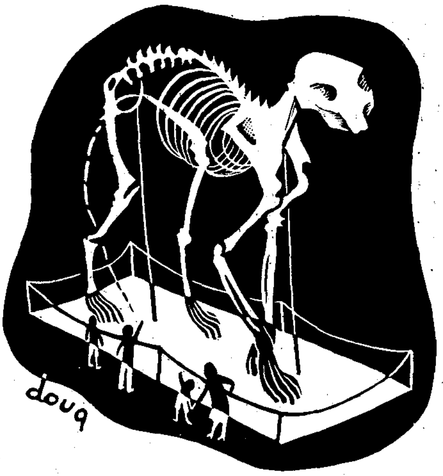
MUSIC

New York City Opera—Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 2-4, at 8; Saturday, Sept. 5, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Sept. 6, at 1 and 7: "The Desert Song," with alternating casts. Conducted by Jim Coleman. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Sept. 9, at 8: "Turandot," with Linda Kelm, Maria Spacagna, Jon Fredric West, and Mark S. Doss; Elio Boncompagni. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 10, at 8: "La Rondine," with Leigh Munro, Claudette Peterson, Jon Garrison, and Stanley Wexler; Alessandro Siciliani. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 11, at 8: "Tosca," with Linda Roark-Strummer, John Absalom, and Julian Patrick; Alessandro Siciliani. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 12, at 2: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Elizabeth Hynes, Gianna Rolandi, Cynthia Rose, Kurt Link, and Timothy Nolen; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 12, at 8: "La Traviata," with Marilyn Mims, Mark Beudert, and Frederick Burchinal; Michael Morgan. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Nov. 15.)

All-Dvořák Concert—With Hilda Harris, mezzo-soprano; Caroline Stoessinger, piano; and the Composers String Quartet. Ossie Davis will introduce the program. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Monday, Sept. 7, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Karl Weigl Concerts—Two evenings of music commemorating this composer. Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 8: Lucy Shelton, soprano; Hilda Harris, mezzo-soprano; George Shirley, tenor; the New World String Quartet; and Paul Silverthorne, viola. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 12, at 9: The New World String Quartet. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—Playing chamber transcriptions of orchestral pieces. With Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Saturday, Sept. 12, at 8.)



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

New York Shakespeare Festival—Free performances of **henry iv, part i.** With Donald Moffat, Tony Soper, and Michael Zaslow; directed by Joseph Papp. The final production of the season. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Through Sunday, Sept. 13. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Central Park Bandshell—Friday, Sept. 4, at 8: Performance works by Georg Osterman, Watchface, and Clarice Marshall. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 5, at 3: Lenny Pickett & the Borneo Horns. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 6, at 3: Astor Piazzolla & the New Tango Quintet. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 11, at 8: Butch Morris and Travis Preston. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 12, at 3: Seven pieces, written by Mark Helias, Lenny Pickett, A. Leroy, and others, for a stationary marching band. (For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday through Monday, Sept. 5-7, and Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12-13, from noon until *sundown.*

COMING EVENTS

(A checklist for readers who plan ahead.)

Baseball—The National League Championship Series begins Oct. 6, and the American League Championship Series begins Oct. 7.

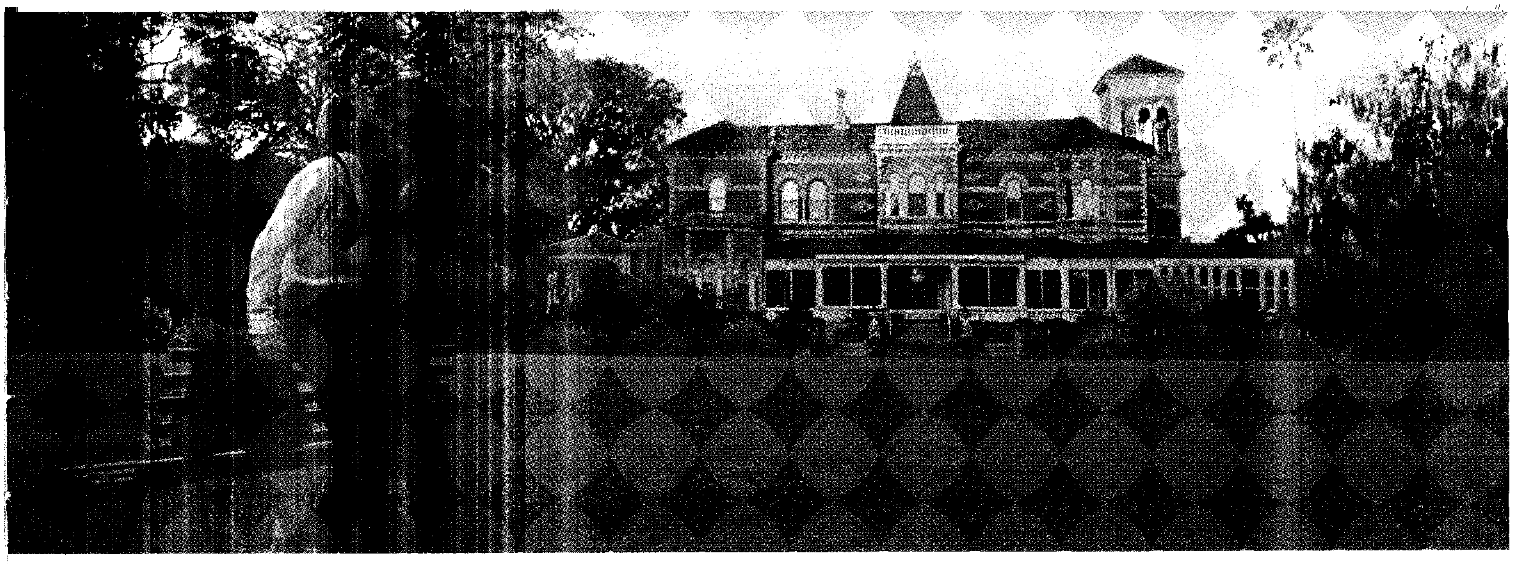
Football—Season openers—At Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands: Giants vs. Dallas, Sept. 20. . . . ¶ Jets vs. New England, Sept. 21.

Hockey—Season openers—Rangers at Madison Square Garden: Vs. Pittsburgh, Oct. 8. . . . ¶ Devils at Byrne Meadowlands Arena: Vs. Pittsburgh, Oct. 9.

Music—**metropolitan opera** (362-6000): The season will open on Sept. 21, with Verdi's "Otello," and will run through April 16. . . . **avery fisher hall** (874-2424): The New York Philharmonic, Colin Davis conducting, Sept. 15 (a nonsubscription benefit concert) and Sept. 17 (first concert of the regular season). . . . ¶ Vienna Philharmonic, Sept. 26. . . . ¶ Moscow Virtuosi, Oct. 4. . . . ¶ Royal Philharmonic, Oct. 9. . . . **carnegie hall** (247-7800): Vienna Philharmonic, Sept. 24-25. . . . ¶ Rotterdam Philharmonic, Oct. 4. . . . ¶ Royal Philharmonic, Oct. 5. . . . **92nd street y** (427-4410): Richard Goode, Sept. 20 and Oct. 4. . . . ¶ Ruth Laredo, Sept. 26. . . . ¶ The New York Chamber Symphony (formerly the Y Chamber Symphony), with Nathan Milstein, Oct. 10-11. . . . **town hall** (840-2824): David Del Tredici, Sept. 28. . . . ¶ Lukas Foss, Oct. 5.

Dance—The Trisha Brown Company, at City Center, Sept. 14-20. . . . ¶ The Feld Ballet, at the Joyce Theatre, Sept. 29-Oct. 31. . . . ¶ "Dancing for Life," a benefit for AIDS relief, at the New York State Theatre, Oct. 5. With members of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, the American Ballet Theatre, the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians, the Feld Ballet, the Martha Graham Dance Company, the Joffrey Ballet, the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, *the Mark Morris Dance Group, the New* York City Ballet, the Paul Taylor Dance Company, and Twyla Tharp Dance. (For information about tickets, call 477-2166.) . . . ¶ The Martha Graham Dance Company, at City Center, Oct. 6-25.

Other Dates—Third-quarter Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax payments are due Tuesday, Sept. 15. . . . ¶ "New York Is Book Country," Sept. 20. . . . ¶ The first day of fall is Sept. 23. . . . ¶ Rosh Hashanah is Sept. 24. . . . ¶ The New York *Film Festival opens on Sept. 25* at Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall, continues at Alice Tully Hall, Sept. 26-Oct. 10, and winds up at Avery Fisher Hall on Oct. 11. . . . ¶ New York Armory Antiques Show, Sept. 30-Oct. 4. . . . ¶ Yom Kippur is Oct. 3.



"Never trust a man who lavishes expensive gifts upon you," my Mother always said. "Unless you really like him."

She told me a lot of things about men, my Mother. And she was almost always right.

But this man was no typical man. This was a man in a million. A man who seemed very fond of me.

It had started only six weeks ago when I was stuck in row 12 on one of those seemingly endless flights that stop in Guam on their way to Tokyo.

In seat 12F, alongside of me, was an elbow that seemed intent on straying across the armrest the entire flight. It was his elbow.

By the time they served lunch I was halfway to falling in love.

Over the next two weeks I saw him just about every day. So when he asked me to join him for a trip out of town, it wasn't really a surprise.

After a long and leisurely lunch at a remote Country Inn, my man took me for a walk into the garden.

"This is for you, and for our days to come," he whispered in my ear as he handed me a package about half the size of a shoe box.

I undid the wrapping paper and revealed a beautiful calfskin jewelry box. With bated breath I lifted the lid.

And there it was, the diamonds glistening in the late afternoon country light, the most exquisite watch you've ever seen.

The name on the textured face identified it as a Concord Saratoga.™

"There are sixteen diamonds locked snugly into that polished eighteen-carat gold and brushed steel bezel," he informed me with a smile, "one for every day I've known you."

The curve of the linkages on the bracelet matched my wrist as though it was designed just for me. And it felt solid and substantial.

This was a watch for a lifetime.

Admiring the way the raised gold numerals seemed to shimmer in the reflected sparkle of the diamonds, I suddenly recalled my Mother's advice.

"There must be strings attached to a gift as beautiful as this?" I asked my man, perhaps a little hopefully.

He let go of me and knelt down on one knee, "I was rather hoping it would help get you to the church on time."

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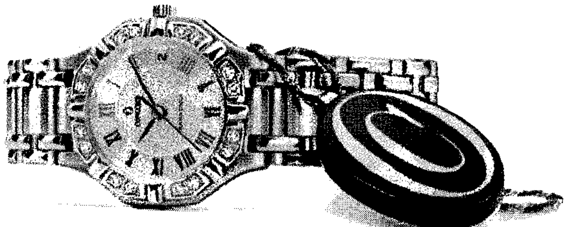

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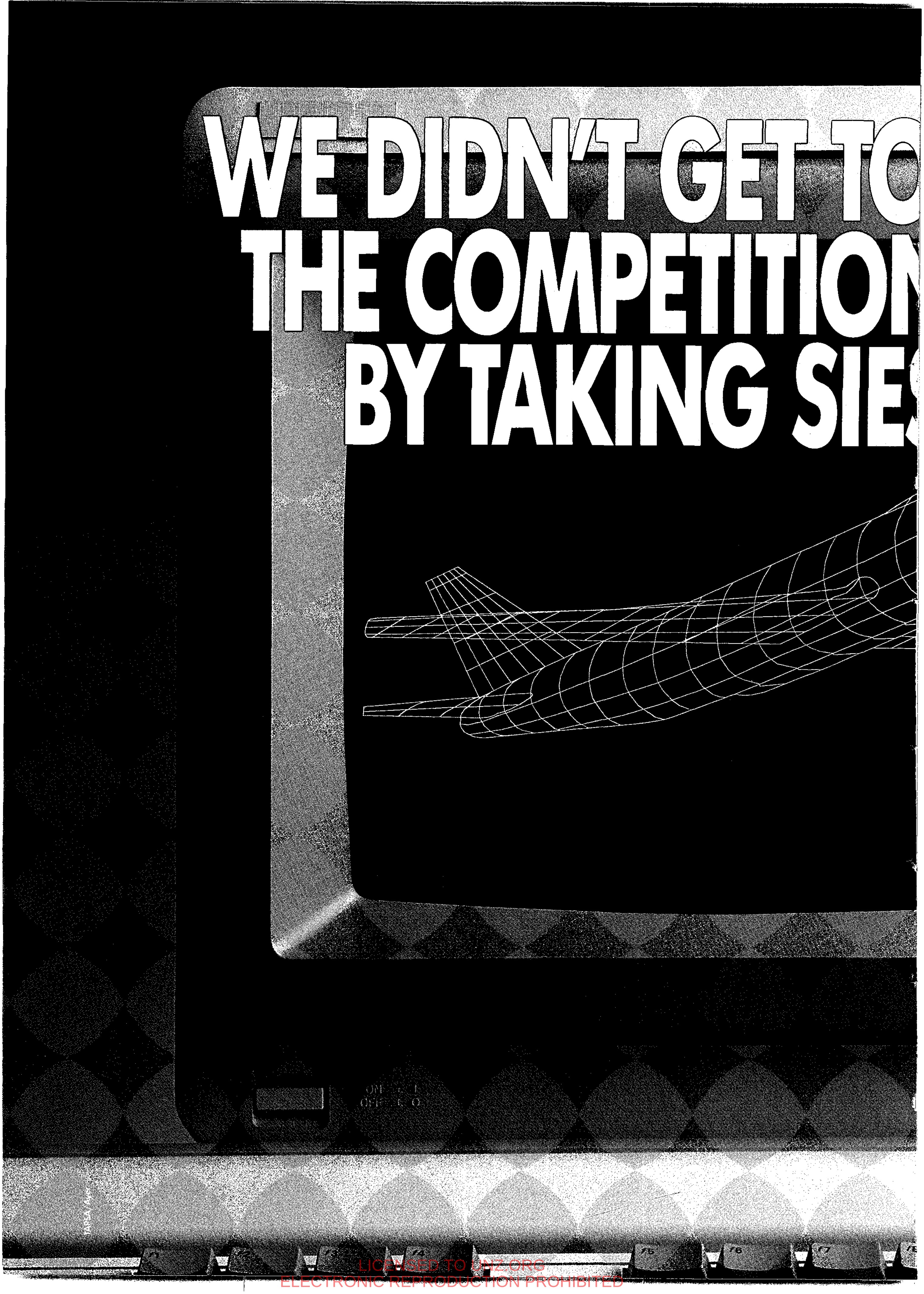
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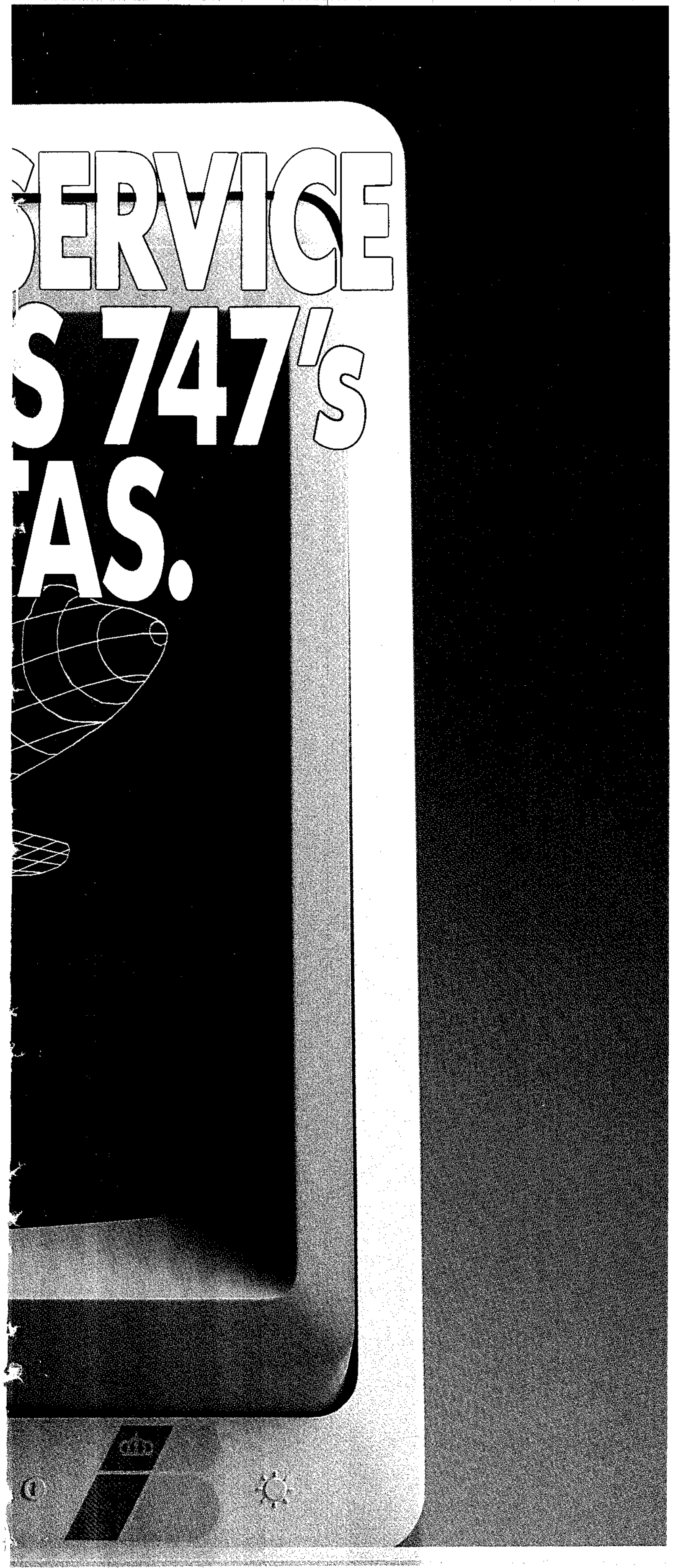

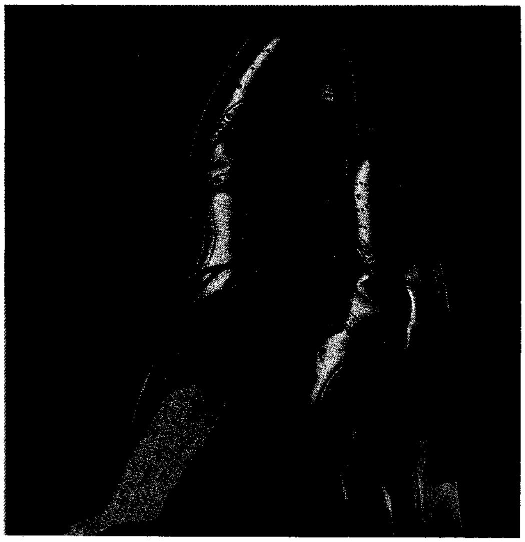

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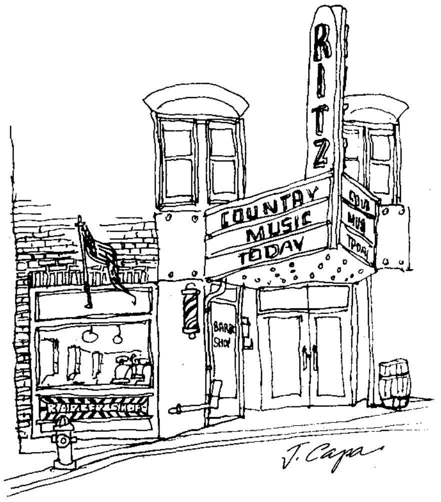
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 15.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Sept. 3: At 6, "Sera Posible el Sur" (1985; directed by Stefan Paul; an Argentine film, in Spanish), at 8, "Rio 100°" (1955; Nelson Pereira dos Santos; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese); and, at 10, "The Good Father" (†).
Sept. 4-10: (Separate admissions) "Rio 100°;" and "Buffet Froid" (1980; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Jean Carmet, Bernard Blier, and Geneviève Page.
From Sept. 11: "Buffet Froid."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Nadine" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Rosary Murders" (Fred Walton), with Donald Sutherland and Charles Durning.
Theatre 3: "The Lost Boys" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"No Way Out" (1987 †).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Stakeout" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "RoboCop" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Living Daylights" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.
Theatre 3: "Hamburger Hill" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The Big Easy" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Garbage Pail Kids Movie" (Rod Amateau).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Maid to Order" (Amy Jones), with Ally Sheedy.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Hamburger Hill" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"La Bamba" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Big Easy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Can't Buy Me Love" (Steve Rash).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "The Lost Boys" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Fourth Protocol" (John Mackenzie), with Michael Caine and Pierce Brosnan.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"RoboCop" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Matewan" (John Sayles), with Chris Cooper and James Earl Jones.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 5: "A Man in Love" (†). From Sept. 6: "Family Business" (Costa-Gavras; in French), with Fanny Ardant and Johnny Hallyday.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Nadine" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Stakeout" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Living Daylights" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.
Theatre 2: "The Rosary Murders" (Fred Walton), with Donald Sutherland and Charles Durning.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through Sept. 10: "The Whistle Blower" (†).
From Sept. 11: "I've Heard the Mermaids Singing" (Patricia Rozema).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"No Way Out" (1987 †).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Maid to Order" (Amy Jones), with Ally Sheedy.

86th Street Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "La Bamba" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Big Easy" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "House II: The Second Story" (Ethan Wiley).
Theatre 2: "Hamburger Hill" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 3: "Disorderlies" (Michael Schultz). From Sept. 4: "Penitentiary 3."
Theatre 2: "Dirty Dancing" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "Flames in the Ashes" (1985; directed by Haim Guri and Jacquot Erlich; mostly in Yiddish and Hebrew).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "The Wolf at the Door" (Henning Carlsen), with Donald Sutherland.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 10: A two-week festival of jazz films. From Sept. 11: "Eat the Peach" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Big Easy" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Fourth Protocol" (John Mackenzie), with Michael Caine and Pierce Brosnan.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Full Metal Jacket" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "La Bamba" (†).
Theatre 2: "Can't Buy Me Love" (Steve Rash).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "My Life as a Dog" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 3: "The Untouchables" (†). From Sept. 4: "The Whistle Blower" (†).
Theatre 3: "Withnail and I" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 3: "A Man in Love" (†). From Sept. 4: "Wish You Were Here" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Maid to Order" (Amy Jones), with Ally Sheedy.
Theatre 2: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Stakeout" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"No Way Out" (1987 †).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Fourth Protocol" (John Mackenzie), with Michael Caine and Pierce Brosnan.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Dirty Dancing" (†).

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through Sept. 3: "Roxanne" (†).
From Sept. 4: "The Whistle Blower" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Withnail and I" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"My Life as a Dog" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Jean de Florette" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Wolf at the Door" (Henning Carlsen), with Donald Sutherland.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"No Way Out" (1987 †).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Living on Tokyo Time" (†).
Theatre 2: "My Life as a Dog" (†).
Theatre 3: "Wish You Were Here" (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Tampopo" (†).
Theatre 2: "Backlash" (Bill Bennett).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Stakeout" (†).
Theatre 2: "Can't Buy Me Love" (Steve Rash).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "The Living Daylights" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.
Theatre 2: "Hamburger Hill" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
Theatre 4: "RoboCop" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Rosary Murders" (Fred Walton), with Donald Sutherland and Charles Durning.
Theatre 6: "The Lost Boys" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "The Big Easy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Stakeout" (†).

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (866-7500)
Through Sept. 3: "House II: The Second Story" (Ethan Wiley).
From Sept. 4: "The Whistle Blower" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Living Daylights" (directed by John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.
Theatre 2: "The Lost Boys" (†).
Theatre 3: "Full Metal Jacket" (†).
Theatre 4: "Disorderlies" (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 5: "The Untouchables" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Monster Squad" (Fred Dekker).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"The Big Easy" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Stakeout" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Rosary Murders" (Fred Walton), with Donald Sutherland and Charles Durning.
Theatre 4: "La Bamba" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Hamburger Hill" (†).

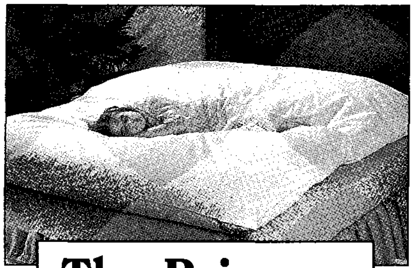
Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Born in East L.A." (Cheech Marin), with Marin.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Dancing" (†).
Theatre 2: "RoboCop" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"House II: The Second Story" (Ethan Wiley).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Sept. 3: Two programs of erotic films.
Sept. 4-5: "Picnic at Hanging Rock" (1975; directed by Peter Weir), with Rachel



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Roberts and Dominic Guard; and "Kangaroo" (1987; Tim Burstall), with Colin Friels and Judy Davis.

Sept. 6: "Last Year at Marienbad" (1961; Alain Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig; and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959; Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Riva and Eiji Okada.

Sept. 7-8: "La Nuit de Varennes" (†); and "Danton" (1983; Andrzej Wajda; in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Sept. 9-10: "Dance Hall Racket" (1956), with Lenny Bruce; and "Lenny Bruce Without Tears" (1972), a documentary.

Sept. 11: Parts 1 and 2 of "Our Hitler" (1980; Hans-Jürgen Syberberg; in German).

Sept. 12: Parts 3 and 4 of "Our Hitler."

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Sept. 2: "Countdown" (1968; Robert Altman), with James Caan and Robert Duvall; and "Destination Moon" (1950; Irving Pichel), with John Archer.

Sept. 3-4: "Warriors of the Wind" (1984; Hayao Miyazaki), a Japanese animated film; and "Infra-Man" (1976; Hua Shan).

Sept. 5-6: "The Man Who Fell to Earth" (1976; Nicolas Roeg), with David Bowie, Rip Torn, Candy Clark, and Buck Henry.

Sept. 7: "Plan 9 from Outer Space" (1956; Edward D. Wood, Jr.), with Bela Lugosi; and "Cat Women of the Moon" (1953; Arthur Hilton), with Sonny Tufts and Marie Windsor.

Sept. 8-9: "It! The Terror from Beyond Space" (1958; Edward L. Cahn); and "Lifeforce" (1985; Tobe Hooper), with Steve Railsback.

Sept. 10: "The Time Machine" (1960; George Pal), with Rod Taylor, Alan Young, Yvette Mimieux, and Sebastian Cabot; and "Conquest of Space" (1955; Byron Haskin), with Walter Brooke and Eric Fleming.

Sept. 11-12: "War of the Worlds" (1953; Byron Haskin), with Gene Barry; and "When Worlds Collide" (1951; Rudolph Maté), with Richard Derr and Barbara Rush.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Sept. 2: "On Approval" (1943; Clive Brook), with Beatrice Lillie and Brook; and "That Uncertain Feeling" (1941; Ernst Lubitsch), with Merle Oberon, Melvyn Douglas, and Burgess Meredith.

Sept. 3: "The Lovers" (1959; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau; and "China Is Near" (1968; Marco Bellocchio; in Italian).

Sept. 4-5: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (1986; Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow, Barbara Hershey, Dianne Wiest, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Lloyd Nolan; and "A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy" (1982; Woody Allen), with Allen, Mia Farrow, José Ferrer, Julie Hagerty, Tony Roberts, and Mary Steenburgen.

Sept. 6: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (1953; Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and Vittorio De Sica; and "Panique" (1946; Julien Duvivier; in French), with Michel Simon, Viviane Romance, and Paul Bernard.

Sept. 7: "A Voyage to Italy" (†); and "Era Notte a Roma" (1960; Roberto Rossellini; in English, Italian, Russian, and German), with Leo Genn, Giovanna Ralli, and Sergei Bondarchuk.

Sept. 8: "Johnny Guitar" (1954; Nicholas Ray), with Joan Crawford, Sterling Hayden, Mercedes McCambridge, and Ernest Borgnine; and "The Shanghai Gesture" (†).

Sept. 9: "L'Atalante" (†) and "Zero for Conduct" (†).

Sept. 10: "The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies" (1962; Ray Dennis Steckler); and "Rat Pfink Boo Boo" (1966; Ray Dennis Steckler).

Sept. 11-12: "The Bicycle Thief" (†) and "Miracle in Milan" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Sept. 2: "The Sun Also Rises" (1957; Henry King), with Tyrone Power, Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Mel Ferrer, and Eddie Albert; and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1952; Henry King), with Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, and Ava Gardner.

Sept. 3: "Houseboat" (1958; Melville Shavelson), with Cary Grant and Sophia Loren; and "Heller in Pink Tights" (1960; George Cukor), with Sophia Loren, Anthony Quinn, and Margaret O'Brien.

Sept. 4-5: "Touch of Evil" (1958; Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942; Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright, Joseph Cotten, Patricia Collinge, Hume Cronyn, and Henry Travers.

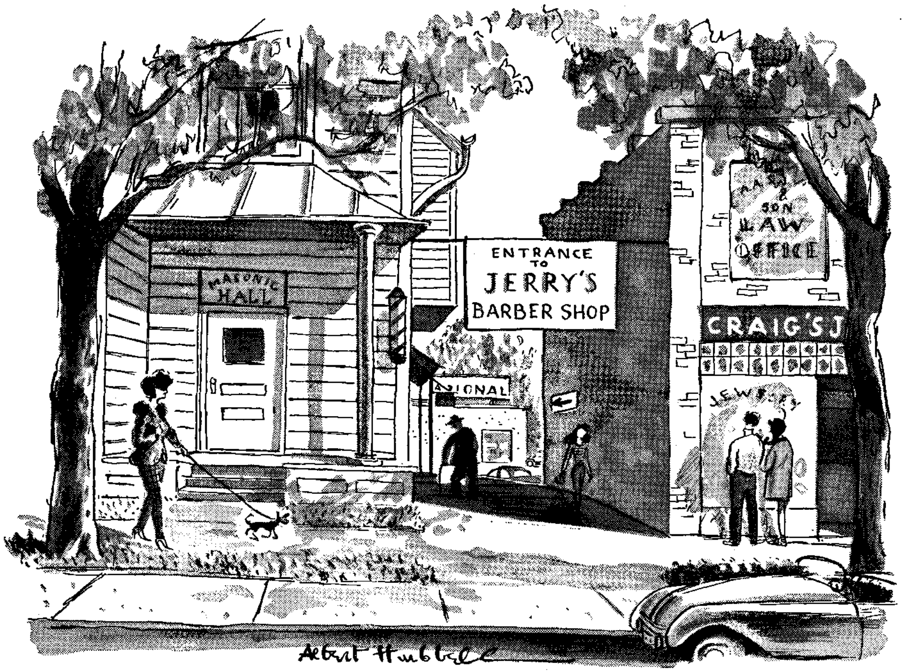
Sept. 6: "The Bicycle Thief" (†) and "Miracle in Milan" (†).

Sept. 7: "Blackmail" (†); and "Sabotage" ("The Woman Alone;" 1936; Alfred Hitchcock), with Sylvia Sidney, Oscar Homolka, and Desmond Tester.

Sept. 8: "China Seas" (1935; Tay Garnett), with Jean Harlow and Clark Gable; and "Riffraff" (1935; J. Walter Ruben), with Jean Harlow and Spencer Tracy.

Sept. 9: "Sweet Bird of Youth" (†) and "Summer and Smoke" (†).

Sept. 10: "Le Jour se Lève" (†); and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (1937; Marcel Carné; in French),



with Louis Jouvet, François Rosay, Jean-Louis Barrault, Michel Simon, and Jean-Pierre Aumont.

Sept. 11-12: "Dinner at Eight" (†) and "The Women" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Sept. 3 at 2:30: "Double Indemnity" (1944; directed by Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson. . . . ¶ Sept. 3 at 6: "Sunset Boulevard" (1950; Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim. . . . ¶ Sept. 4 at 2:30: "A Foreign Affair" (1948; Billy Wilder), with Jean Arthur, Marlene Dietrich, and John Lund. . . . ¶ Sept. 4 at 6: "Double Indemnity." . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 2: "Monsieur Beaucaire" (1946; George Marshall), with Bob Hope, Joan Caulfield, Marjorie Reynolds, Joseph Schildkraut, and Cecil Kellaway. . . . ¶ Sept. 5 at 5 and Sept. 6 at 2: "A Place in the Sun" (1951; George Stevens), with Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, and Shelley Winters. . . . ¶ Sept. 6 at 5 and Sept. 7 at 2:30: "The Big Clock" (1948; John Farrow), with Ray Milland, Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Sullivan, George Macready, and Elsa Lanchester. . . . ¶ Sept. 7 at 6: "Monsieur Beaucaire." . . . ¶ Sept. 8 at 2:30: "Funny Face" (1957; Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, and Kay Thompson. . . . ¶ Sept. 8 at 6 and Sept. 10 at 2:30: "The Country Girl" (1954; George Seaton), with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and William Holden. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 at 6: "War of the Worlds" (1953; Byron Haskin), with Gene Barry. . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 2:30: "Artists and Models" (1955; Frank Tashlin), with Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Shirley MacLaine, Dorothy Malone, Eva Gabor, and Anita Ekberg. . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 6: "The Court Jester" (1956; Norman Panama and Melvin Frank), with Danny Kaye, Glynis Johns, Basil Rathbone, Angela Lansbury, and Mildred Natwick. . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 2: "War of the Worlds." . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 5: "Artists and Models."

Theatre 2: Sept. 3 at 6:30 and Sept. 5 at 4: "The Attempt to Live" (1983; Johann Feindt; in German, with English subtitles), a documentary.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Through Sept. 26: "Elvis Presley: The Television Work," a retrospective. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

L'Atalante (1934)—Jean Vigo, who died in his twenties, made only this one feature-length film—a sensuous, poetic love story about a young barge captain on the Seine who marries and takes his bride with him; after a quarrel she runs off and they lose each other. Jean Dasté and Dita Parlo are the lovers; Michel Simon is the tattooed barge hand who finds her and brings her back. It's a wonderfully spontaneous, unarranged-looking film. It's also a strange film—much slower and more consciously dreamlike than Vigo's short works. In some ways it's more pleasurable in the memory than while you're seeing it. With Louis Lefèvre. In French. (Thalia SoHo; Sept. 9.)

La Bamba—Written and directed by Luis Valdez, this is the life story of the Chicano rock 'n' roller Ritchie Valens (Lou Diamond Phillips), who had three hit records before he died at seventeen in a plane crash, in 1959. Valdez isn't primarily concerned with Ritchie Valens as the bullet of talent he must have been. The film's Ritchie is simply a warm, friendly Latino version of the boy next door. Ritchie Valens' music, as it's performed by the group Los Lobos, with David Hidalgo singing for Phillips, is what carries the movie along, but even with the music and brief appearances by Stephen Lee, Brian Setzer, and Howard Huntsberry, this is a leaden, lachrymose piece of filmmaking. With the fiery, hammy Esai Morales as Ritchie's tormented, bad-boy half brother, Bob; Elizabeth Peña (she has a comic side) as Bob's wife, who keeps looking at him with disgust; Rosana De Soto as the boys' mother; Joe Pantoliano as Bob Keene; and Marshall Crenshaw as Buddy Holly. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/10/87.) (Plaza, 86th Street Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, and Embassy.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—The story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness: humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, encompassing much more than the realistic method leads you to expect. And the richness and the enigmas sneak up on you. This neorealist classic, directed by Vittorio De Sica and written by Cesare Zavattini, is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. It isn't a movie that warms you, though; it doesn't have the flawed poetry that De Sica's "Shoeshine" and "Miracle in Milan" (see below) have. In Italian. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 6. . . . ¶ Thalia SoHo; Sept. 11-12.)

The Big Easy—With Dennis Quaid and Ellen Barkin, directed by Jim McBride. (Reviewed in this issue.) (34th St. East, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street Twin, Waverly, Metro Cinema, and Embassy 1.)

Blackmail (1929)—A London-set Hitchcock silent thriller that was in part reshot and in part dubbed to make it a sound film—and an unusually imaginative and innovative one. The heroine is played by the German actress Anny Ondra. (Her voice is dubbed.) Cyril Ritchard, who didn't look very different half a century later, plays the artist who tries to rape her. Also with Sara Allgood, John Longden, and Donald Calthrop. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 7.)

Dinner at Eight (1933)—Jean Harlow, with her bee-stung pucker and her tinny voice, at her comic best. George Cukor directed this witty, much improved version of the Edna Ferber–George S. Kaufman play, with a big-gun cast that includes Marie Dressler, John Barrymore, Lee Tracy, Wallace Beery, and Edmund Lowe. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 11-12.)

Dirty Dancing—Set in a Catskills resort in the summer of 1963, this bright dance musical is about the role that dancing had in the embryonic counterculture. It's also a girl's version of that old phony: the-summer-I-grew-up-and-everything-changed. In the boys' version, the hero typically came down to earth with a jolt. But this is a girl's coming-of-age fantasy: the seventeen-year-old heroine, Baby (Jennifer Grey), ascends to spiritual and sensual perfection. For Baby, a doctor's daughter, the change occurs as the result of self-discovery through dancing and then through her sexual initiation and her full and open commitment to the resort's working-class dance instructor, Johnny (Patrick Swayze). He has been treated as nothing and he has come to believe he's nothing; Baby the fearless changes all that. Too many life lessons are learned in this bubbleheaded, retro vision of growing up in the sixties, and its wish-fulfillment aspect makes Baby and Johnny and all their dirty-dancing friends pure of heart—it defuses any possible explosiveness in the material. But the director, Emile Ardolino, and the choreographer, Kenny Ortega, use the dancing to bring out the sensual dreaminess of the songs, and the screenwriter, Eleanor Bergstein, writes light, rumpled dialogue that helps you over the hooey. You come out of the theatre giggling happily. With Cynthia Rhodes, Jack Weston, Jerry Orbach, Honi Coles, Lonny Price, Kelly Bishop, and Jane Brucker. (8/24/87) (Gemini, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 57th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Eat the Peach—Whimsical, with an element of desperation underneath. The setting is an Irish village just a few miles across the border from Northern Ireland. Thrown out of work when the local Japanese computer factory closes down, Vinnie (Stephen Brennan) and his brother-in-law, Arthur (Eamon Morrissey), watch a cassette of Elvis Presley in the 1964 "Roustabout" and see a motorcyclist ride in a carnival Wall of Death—a round, wide, high, barrel-like track where centrifugal force keeps the rider up in the air circling. Soon they're building their own Wall of Death. This engaging, informal movie—it's loose, with a lot of humor—is about the deep-seated eccentricity of a man like Vinnie, who solves only those problems that tease his imagination. Building the Wall keeps his brains and hopes from rotting. The director, Peter Ormrod, and the producer, John Kelleher, wrote the script together; they tell the story (which is based on actual events) as if it were a simple one, taking care to let it expand in our minds. This is not like any other film you've seen; at times you may feel a little tuned out, but then the vision comes together. When Vinnie's little daughter, her face as determined as his, rides her tricycle along the Wall, trying to climb it, there's nothing coy about the kid. And when she wakes up one night and rushes outside, her hair streaming back from her head, she's the soul of Ireland, the way Sara Allgood was when she played in "Juno and the Paycock." With Catherine Byrne as Nora, Niall Toibin as Boots, and Bernadette O'Neill as the blond barmaid. (7/27/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema; starting Sept. 11.)

Full Metal Jacket—Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam film stays reasonably close to its source, Gustav Hasford's compressed, white-hot novel "The Short-Timers," yet the novel has an accumulating force of horror and the movie doesn't. The first three-quarters of an hour is basic training in the Marines stripped down to a cartoonish horrorshow; it's military S & M, and the pounding compulsiveness can easily be taken for the work of a master director. After that, the movie becomes dispersed, and you can't get an emotional reading on it. Kubrick probably believes he's numbing us by the power of his vision, but he's actually numbing us by its emptiness. The script is by Kubrick, Michael Herr, and Hasford. Shot in England, with Matthew Modine as Private Joker, who wears a Peace symbol; Vincent D'Onofrio as poor, doughy-faced Pyle; Lee Ermey as the gunnery sergeant; and Arliss Howard, Dorian Harewood, and Adam Baldwin. (7/13/87) (8th St. Playhouse, and Criterion Center.)

The Good Father—Directed by Mike Newell, it has the festering gloom and dissatisfied-with-itself hatefulness that seem to be the current English badge of integrity. Anthony Hopkins plays Bill Hooper, who was once a college radical and aspiring writer, and is now a grimy-souled marketing executive with a publishing house. He came of age in the sixties, believing in equal rights for women; he's still pro-feminist but when he thinks of the wife he has left he hears himself muttering "Bloody bitch." (And he has horrible, guilty dreams of murdering his tiny son.) Based on the 1983 novel by Peter Prince, this is an attempt to get at the new complications in the sex wars and perhaps at the whole modern English muddle. There are glimmers of truth in this movie, and it holds you, yet there's no clarity or relief in its truth. Everything seems blue and damp and constricted. If Newell has a goal, it seems to be to leave you with a sense of impacted bleakness. You never see Bill Hooper (or the director) take pleasure in anything. Newell keeps showing you what lice Englishmen are. (Englishwomen seem exempt from the moral pollution—they've been made a shade too tender and decent.) With Jim Broadbent, Fanny Viner, Harriet Walter, and bravura turns by Simon Callow as a beady-eyed little devil of a barrister and Miriam Margolyes as a feminist lawyer up against a reactionary judge. Screenplay by Christopher Hampton. (4/6/87) (Public Theatre; through Sept. 3, showings at 10.)

Hamburger Hill—With John Irvin. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Gotham Cinema, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Jean de Florette—The setting is Provence in the

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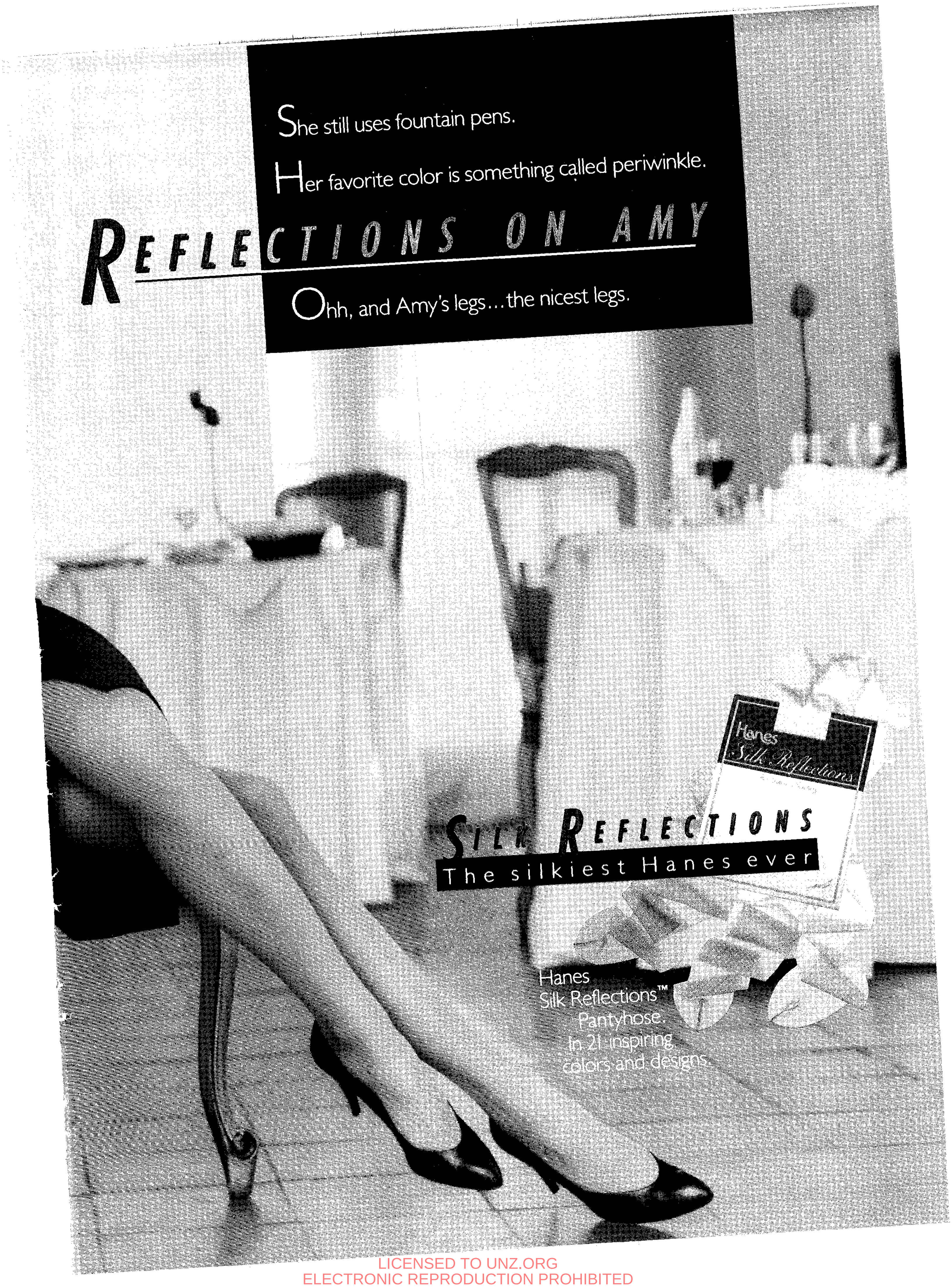

She still uses fountain pens.

Her favorite color is something called periwinkle.

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early nineteen-twenties. As the hunchback Jean de Florette, an educated, nature-loving city fellow who has learned about farming from books, Gérard Depardieu wears "GOOD MAN" in capital letters across his wide brow; in smaller letters we can read "He has poetry in his soul." Jean has a devoted wife (Elisabeth Depardieu), who used to sing in opera, and a delicate little daughter named Manon. And for slightly over two hours we watch him trudge across the land he has inherited hauling two barrels of water that are fastened across his hump. When there's no rain, his plants shrivel and his rabbits die, and it's agonizing for us, because we know that there's a spring of fresh mountain water on the land. His neighbors—the prosperous, greedy old peasant César Soubeyran (Yves Montand) and César's dull-witted nephew, Ugolin (Daniel Auteuil)—have hidden the spring under a load of cement, so that Jean will be forced to sell out to them. Adapted from the first volume of Marcel Pagnol's two-part novel "The Water of the Hills," published in 1963 (it was derived from a picture he made in 1952), "Jean de Florette" is to be followed, later this year, by "Manon of the Spring." The director, Claude Berri, who did the adaptation with Gérard Brach, aimed for fidelity to the novel; he has said that it was his task to give the material "a cinematic rhythm," but "there was no need for imagination." That's what *he* thinks. The wide-screen cinematography is by Bruno Nuytten. In French. (7/13/87) (Paris.)

Le Jour se Lève (1939; "Daybreak")—The director, Marcel Carné, and the writer, Jacques Prévert, collaborated on this justly famous film about a decent sort of man (Jean Gabin) who is forced to become a murderer by the masochistic trickery of the man he kills, played by Jules Berry. Perhaps the finest of the French poetic melodramas, it's a definitive example of sensuous, atmospheric moviemaking. With Arletty and Jacqueline Laurent. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 10.)

Living on Tokyo Time—Steven Okazaki's low-budget independent comedy has a fair number of good, knowing jokes about rock 'n' roll around the edges, but its center—a mild anecdote about a marriage of convenience between a girl from Tokyo who wants to stay in San Francisco and a painfully quiet Japanese-American guitarist—is strictly easy-listening. This is a culture-clash movie: Kyoko (Minako Ohashi) isn't very fluent in English, and Ken (Ken Nakagawa) has no Japanese, so they can't communicate. The problem is, they look like they wouldn't know what to say anyway—and that's the movie's problem, too. Okazaki's real interest seems to lie in Ken's basement-band subculture: the world of dim, marginal rock 'n' rollers whose drug of choice, or economic necessity, is junk food, whose T-shirts and posters (Ken's include Patti Smith, Johnny Thunders, and the Velvet Underground) are more expressive than their music.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Lost Boys—Or, "I Was Almost a Teen-age Vampire." The only distinction of this brainless horror comedy is that it adds an especially convenient new concept to the lore of vampire movies: the reversible vampire. The hero (Jason Patric) and the heroine (Jami Gertz) are "half-vampires," who drink blood, but only from the bottle; they haven't made their first kills yet. And, according to the new rules, if they can find and destroy the head vampire they'll be normal kids again—completely detoxed. It's a half-movie. The kid cast includes Corey Haim, Corey Feldman, and, as the most ferocious of the adolescent bloodsuckers, Kiefer Sutherland. Adults Dianne Wiest, Edward Herrmann, and Barnard Hughes slum morosely. Directed by Joel Schumacher.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Baronet, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

A Man in Love—Writer-director Diane Kurys's fourth feature, about an affair between an egocentric married American actor (Peter Coyote) and a young English-Italian bit player (Greta Scacchi), alternates hot love scenes with cold showers of bad ideas. He's playing the lead in a film about Cesare Pavese, the Italian writer who committed suicide in 1950; her mother (Claudia Cardinale) is dying of cancer. Love, Death, the Cinema, we're meant to think, as Kurys's camera scans Coyote's face for masculine treacherousness and drools over the soft curves of Scacchi's body. The young actress seems bubble-brained throughout, but in the end she becomes a Writer, to the accompaniment of Georges Delerue's swelling music. This is art-movie making at its most dishonest. The unusually attractive cast, which also includes Peter Riegert and Jamie Lee Curtis, flounders through one toneless scene after another. In English, French, and Italian. —T.R. (Quad Cinema; through Sept. 3. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through Sept. 5.)

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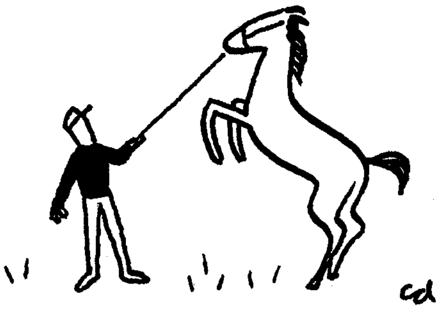
Miracle in Milan (1951)—Part social satire, part fantasy, this Vittorio De Sica film suggests a childlike view of Dostoyevski's "The Idiot." A fun-loving old lady finds a newborn baby in a cabbage patch. The baby becomes Toto the Good, the happy man who loves everyone; when he is frustrated in his desire to help people, the old lady, now an angel, comes down and gives him the power to work miracles. Toto the hero, naïve and full of love, organizes a hobo shantytown into an ideal community, but the social contradictions are ludicrously hopeless—not even magic powers can resolve them. The failure of innocence here is touchingly absurd; the film is stylized poetry, and it is like nothing else that De Sica ever did. Francesco Golissano is perfect as Toto; the heroine, Brunella Bovo, is what Chaplin's heroines should have been but weren't. The film provides a beautiful role for that great, almost legendary lady of the Italian theatre, Emma Gramatica (many, many years before, she had taken over Duse's roles and acted under the direction of D'Annunzio); as the supremely silly old woman of De Sica's fairy tale, she is as yielding and permissive as his Umberto D. is proud and stubborn. In Italian. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 6. . . . ¶ Thalia SoHo; Sept. 11-12.)

My Life as a Dog—Lasse Hallström's film is a gentle, episodic narrative of a twelve-year-old boy (Anton Glanzelius) growing up in nineteen-fifties Sweden. Ingemar, a lively but sensitive kid, gets passed around from household to household when his mother becomes seriously ill. At its best, the movie is very shrewd about the ways children protect themselves from disorienting, and even traumatic, experiences. Hallström's naïveté as a director gives many of the dramatic scenes a touching straightforwardness. But that same quality sabotages the comic passages with a tone of heavy, self-satisfied whimsy. With Tomas von Brömssen, Anki Liden, Ingmari Carlsson, and Melinda Kinnaman. Screenplay by Hallström, Reidar Jönsson, Brasse Brännstrom, and Per Berglund, from Jönsson's novel. In Swedish.—T.R. (Quad Cinema, Carnegie Screening Room, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Nadine—You have to keep reminding yourself that you're not just watching the trailer. The picture features such faded thrills as a shack full of dynamite, a box packed with rattlesnakes, and an ancient, rickety ladder stretched horizontally between two rooftops. You never quite get involved. Kim Basinger is Nadine, a manicurist in a beauty parlor in Austin, Texas, in 1954, who stalls on giving her small-time dreamer husband (Jeff Bridges) a divorce, because she still loves him. When she has been at the scene of a murder and, by mistake, got hold of copies of state plans for a superhighway—inside information that real-estate speculators could parlay into big money—she turns to him for help, and they're both trapped by the local crook (Rip Torn) who arranged for the copies in the first place. Written and directed by Robert Benton, the picture is like a genteel variant of a redneck, hillbilly burlesque about how it pays to be lucky and dumb. Basinger is peculiarly muted as an actress and Bridges no longer has the manic, boyish spontaneity his role calls for. As a scuzzball photographer, Jerry Stiller, who has just one scene before he turns into the murder victim, conveys a lifetime of self-disgust—that's more felt life than anyone else shows. With Glenne Headly, Mickey Jones, and Gwen Verdon. (8/24/87) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Gemini.)



No Way Out—With Kevin Costner and Gene Hackman, directed by Roger Donaldson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gramercy, Loews Tower East, Guild, and Loews Paramount.)

La Nuit de Varennes (1981)—Descended from a long line of "Gallic romps," this is a creakingly cultured historical pageant set in the time of Louis XVI. For diverse reasons, assorted historical and fictional personages are travelling by stagecoach to Varennes. As the decaying Casanova, Marcello Mastroianni has a couple of superb moments—one with Laura Betti as a jolly touring opera singer, and one with Andrea Ferreol as a wealthy woman who declares her passion for him. Jean-Louis Barrault looks great as the scandalously popular, often pornographic writer Restif de la Bretonne, but the role has been written to make Restif a darling old reprobate, and Barrault just keeps smiling. Also with Hanna Schygulla as a royalist countess; Jean-Claude Brialy, who is almost a comic archetype as her devoted hairdresser; Harvey Keitel as Thomas Paine; and Daniel Gelin and Jean-Louis Trintignant. Written by the director, Ettore Scola, and Sergio Amidei. A French-Italian co-production, in French. (Cinema Village; Sept. 7-8.)

RoboCop—In this punk sci-fi revenge fantasy, the near future is played for depravity, for kicks. Set in a Detroit of cloud-topped skyscrapers and a decaying older part of the city where rapists and vandals run wild and every day is open season on cops, the movie is shot in a deliberate sicko-sleazo comic-book style. (Body parts are treated as if they were autobody parts.) When Murphy (Peter Weller), a young cop employed by the all-powerful conglomerate OCP, is blown apart by a gang of scummy sadists, OCP's scientists use his remains as part of a cyborg—an experimental model for an organic, automated cop that requires food but is virtually indestructible and is programmed to keep order. The Dutch director, Paul Verhoeven, was nastily witty in "The 4th Man," but here, working in English, he doesn't have the timing or the spirit for that. This isn't gallows humor—it's just gallows pulp. As Murphy's woman-cop partner, Nancy Allen has the right soft tones to give the movie a little differentiation; it makes sense that she would get through to RoboCop's human memory. (When he removes his steel hood, his tense, pained face has the imaginative beauty that stirs audiences at classic horror films.) With Kurtwood Smith, Miguel Ferrer, Daniel O'Herlihy, Ronny Cox, and Robert DoQui. Written by Edward Neumeier and Michael Miner. (8/10/87) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, D. W. Griffith, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Roxanne—Steve Martin is improbably light on his feet in this airy, modern love comedy based on Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac." He seems to crossbreed the skills of W. C. Fields and Buster Keaton, with some Fred Astaire mingled in. And as the stargazer Roxanne Daryl Hannah gives off a womanly radiance—a combination of carnality and moonglow. Directed by Fred Schepisi, from Martin's script, this film is unabashedly romantic. It's set in the ski-resort town of Nelson, Washington (nestled against the mountains, it seems a dream-built locale, but it's actually Nelson, British Columbia). You want to go to the town; you want to go back

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to the movie. It has a mellow, dotty charm. With Shelley Duvall, Rick Rossovich, Shandra Beri, and a squad of volunteer firefighters who are like Keystone Cops. Cinematography by Ian Baker; music by Bruce Smeaton. (6/15/87) (New Carnegie; through Sept. 3.)

The Shanghai Gesture (1941)—Hilariously, awesomely terrible. Pressure groups were so strong at the time that the moviemakers had to clean up John Colton's old melodrama about night-life depravities in Shanghai; Mother Goddam became Mother Gin Sling (Ona Munson), and her establishment became nothing more disreputable than a gambling den. Josef von Sternberg proceeded to pack the orgiastic, smoky atmosphere with crowds, and in the foreground he put one of the most ridiculous casts ever assembled. Victor Mature, in a burnous, as the languid Dr. Omar—his eyes welling with mysterious passions—is worth the price of admission, and when you throw in Gene Tierney, as Poppy, a rich girl going to the dogs (Tierney acts as if she's having a tantrum in Schrafft's over the fudge sauce), you've got a gorgeous travesty. Some of this effect is probably intentional, but the total effect couldn't have been. With Walter Huston, Maria Ouspenskaya, and Phyllis Brooks. (Thalia SoHo; Sept. 8.)

Stakeout—Wanting to be loved isn't necessarily the worst thing in an actor: Richard Dreyfuss makes his adorableness amusing here, and gives his most confident star performance to date. He and Emilio Estevez play two Seattle police detectives who are assigned to the night shift on a stakeout, watching the former girlfriend (Madeleine Stowe) of an escaped convict (Aidan Quinn). The Dreyfuss character finds himself falling in love with the woman he's spying on, and when he breaks the rules and spends time with her he's aware that his partner, Estevez, is watching him. Hypnotized by the soft-lipped Irish-Mexican beauty played by Stowe, he's also mugging for the benefit of the young worrywart Estevez. All this is a jolly setup for amorous farce, and Dreyfuss has a Chaplinesque glee in some of the scenes; he's fun to watch. The director, John Badham, does his most entertaining work in years, but you feel the pressure of engineering underneath. You know that the movie is scheduled to deliver action, and Badham keeps everything dark and grungy, with frequent cuts to the cop-hating escaped convict, who is committing a few murders as he makes his way to Seattle. For all the nippiness in the dialogue (the script is by Jim Kouf), and the comic interplay of the actors, the picture doesn't leave you with anything. Aidan Quinn, who first appears heavily bearded, has a dashing, bulging-blue-eyed scariness. (Shot in and around Vancouver.) (8/24/87) (Bay Cinema, Beekman, 23rd St. West Triplex, Embassy 72nd St., Metro Cinema, and Embassy.)

Summer and Smoke (1961)—There's supposed to be something on fire inside Alma, Tennessee Williams' lonely, inhibited preacher's daughter, but from Geraldine Page's performance and Peter Glenville's direction 'tain't smoke that rises—just wispy little old tired ideas goin' to rejoin the Holy Ghost. Laurence Harvey is the virile doctor's son who represents flesh to Alma's spirit. With Una Merkel, Thomas Gomez, Rita Moreno, and Pamela Tiffin. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 9.)

Sweet Bird of Youth (1962)—Paul Newman as the gigolo Chance Wayne, and Geraldine Page as the battered, fading star Alexandra Del Lago, in Richard Brooks' slicked-up version of Tennessee Williams' flamboyant pop fantasy. This hysterical twaddle features a sadistic attack on Newman, engineered by Ed Begley, a crooked political boss, and a climactic telephone soliloquy by Miss Page. Shirley Knight, Rip Torn, and Mildred Dunnock are also involved in the madness. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 9.)

Tampopo—Written and directed by Juzo Itami, this understated farce has its own brand of dippy enchantment. It's about noodles, pleasure, and the movies. The title, which is Japanese for "dandelion," is the name of a fortyish widow (Nobuko Miyamoto) who is trying to make a go of a run-down noodle shop on the outskirts of Tokyo. A courtly truck driver (Tsutomu Yamazaki), who wears a dark-brown cowboy hat straight across his brow, like the righteous hero of a solemn Western, makes it his mission to help her become a real noodle cook. The film crosscuts between the story of Tampopo and her cowboy samurai and the culinary-erotic adventures of a pair of lovers: a gangster in a white suit and his ready-for-everything cutie. These two demonstrate that eating and sex can be the same thing. The movie is constructed like a comic essay, with random frivolous touches, and much of it is shot in hot, bright color that suggests a neon fusion of urban night life and movie madness. The subtexts connect with viewers' funnybones at different times, and part of the fun of the movie is listening to the sudden eruptions of giggles—it's as if some kids were running around in the theatre tickling people. In Japanese. (6/1/87) (Cinema Studio.)

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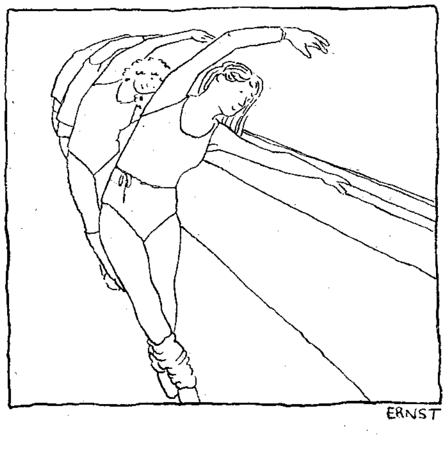
The Untouchables—Set in Chicago circa 1930—Al Capone's capital of crime—this Brian De Palma movie, from a script by David Mamet, is like an attempt to visualize the public's collective dream of Chicago gangsters. Our movie-fed imagination of the past is enlarged and given a new vividness. De Palma is a showman here. Everything is neatly done in broad strokes, and the slight unbelievability of it all makes it more enjoyable. Robert De Niro's Capone is a plump peacock with receding hair and a fat cigar in his mouth. The four men who fight to restore the honor of a corrupted society—the four who can't be bribed, the Untouchables—are the fresh-faced young Special Agent Eliot Ness, played by Kevin Costner; a smart, ornery veteran cop, played (magnificently) by Sean Connery; a rookie-cop sharpshooter (Andy Garcia); and a small, middle-aged accountant (Charles Martin Smith). It's not a great movie; it's too banal, too morally comfortable—the script is too obvious. But it's a great audience movie. Cinematography by Stephen H. Burum; music by Ennio Morricone. (Every now and then you may wonder what Morricone's throbbing disco-synthesizer beat is doing in this period.) (6/29/87) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through Sept. 3.)

A Voyage to Italy (1953)—Roberto Rossellini made this study of a marriage in trouble, starring Ingrid Bergman and George Sanders; in the film's finest scene, the couple visit Pompeii and see two petrified embracing bodies that have just been uncovered. An influential film (there are echoes of it in both Godard's "Contempt" and Bergman's "The Touch"), which is marred by banality and clumsiness. In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Sept. 7.)

The Whistle Blower—A gray, muted British thriller about double-dealing and intricate coverups in the intelligence service. Julian Bond's script (from a novel by John Hale) aims for the tone of civilized amorality familiar to readers of John le Carré, and the director, Simon Langton, has worked this territory before—he directed the memorable TV adaptation of "Smiley's People." But this story isn't quite complex or surprising enough to engage us fully—the fiendish overelaboration of a le Carré plot is missing. It's painless, though, thanks mostly to its good cast. Michael Caine is, as always, effortlessly convincing; Sir John Gielgud provides yet another of his impeccably chiselled cameos; Barry Foster does a spectacular drunk scene; and Nigel Havers, Felicity Dean, James Fox, and Gordon Jackson mill competently through the background.—T.R. (68th St. Playhouse; through Sept. 10. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema, New Carnegie, and Columbia Cinema; starting Sept. 4.)



Wish You Were Here—Set in a seaside town on the south coast of England and shot in warm, sunny flesh tones, this English comedy has a satirical yet dreamlike texture. It's about an uncontrollably ribald girl who flaunts her sexuality the same way she flaunts taboo words. It's 1951; she lifts up her skirts to show off her Betty Grable legs and gives men a good look at her knickers. The sixteen-year-old Emily Lloyd, who plays the part, has the kind of freshness and youthfulness that can't be faked on camera; she embodies everything that the writer-director David Leland is trying to say about the spontaneity, the honesty, and the happy, rude extroversion that kids have pressured out of them. The film is based on the early years of Cynthia Payne, who was the inspiration for the madam in "Personal Services" (which Leland wrote). The first-rate cast includes Tom Bell as the girl's bookie lover, Geoffrey Hutchings as her father, Jesse Birdsall as her bus-conductor boyfriend, Pat Heywood as her aunt, and Heathcote Williams as the psychiatrist she's taken to. The film has its banal side, but it's never visually banal; the cinematography is by Ian Wilson. (7/27/87) (Lincoln Plaza. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Sept. 4.)

Withnail and I—This first film directed by Bruce Robinson is a very peculiar comedy about a pair of young unemployed actors living in London in 1969. This isn't the bright, swinging London of sixties legend but the damp and sunless city that always was and always will be—a claustrophobic, mildewy atmosphere lightened only by sporadic blasts of undergraduate wit. The heroes are extremely funny in the first half hour, using jokes and a variety of intoxicants to keep the rot from seeping into their bones. Then Robinson (who also wrote the screenplay) transplants them to a decrepit country cottage, and the picture—almost literally—bogs down: there hasn't been this much mud onscreen since the last hour of "The Seven Samurai." He never completely runs out of comic energy, though, and Richard E. Grant, as the flamboyantly dissolute Withnail, is wonderful throughout. This crumbling hippie/dandy is never so drunk or so stoned that he can't launch a brittle bon mot, in a perfect upper-class accent. He suggests, simultaneously, George Sanders and Keith Richards—no small accomplishment. With Paul McGann (as "I"), Richard Griffiths, and Ralph Brown as a drug dealer who attaches himself like a mold to the heroes' sofa.—T.R. (Quad Cinema, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

The Women (1939)—Clare Boothe Luce's ode to wisecracking cattiness, given the full, expensive M-G-M treatment in its first movie version. It suggests rich men's worst suspicions and fantasies of what women want (money) and what they're like when they're together (clawing beasties). With Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, Paulette Goddard, Joan Fontaine, Mary Boland, Marjorie Main, Hedda Hopper, Margaret Dumont, Virginia Grey, Virginia Weidler, Ruth Hussey, Phyllis Povah, Lucile Watson, and noble Norma Shearer, weeping, weeping. George Cukor directed—surprisingly coarsely; it's a kicking, screaming low comedy. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 11-12.)

Zero for Conduct (1933)—School as seen through the eyes of children. Jean Vigo's forty-four-minute-long comedy-fantasy about a schoolchildren's revolt is one of the most poetic films ever made and one of the most influential, both in theme (as in Truffaut's "The 400 Blows" and Lindsay Anderson's "If . . .") and in its leaping continuity (as in Godard's "Breathless"). Vigo himself was clearly influenced by Abel Gance's pillow-fight sequence in "Napoléon." In French. (Thalia SoHo; Sept. 9.)

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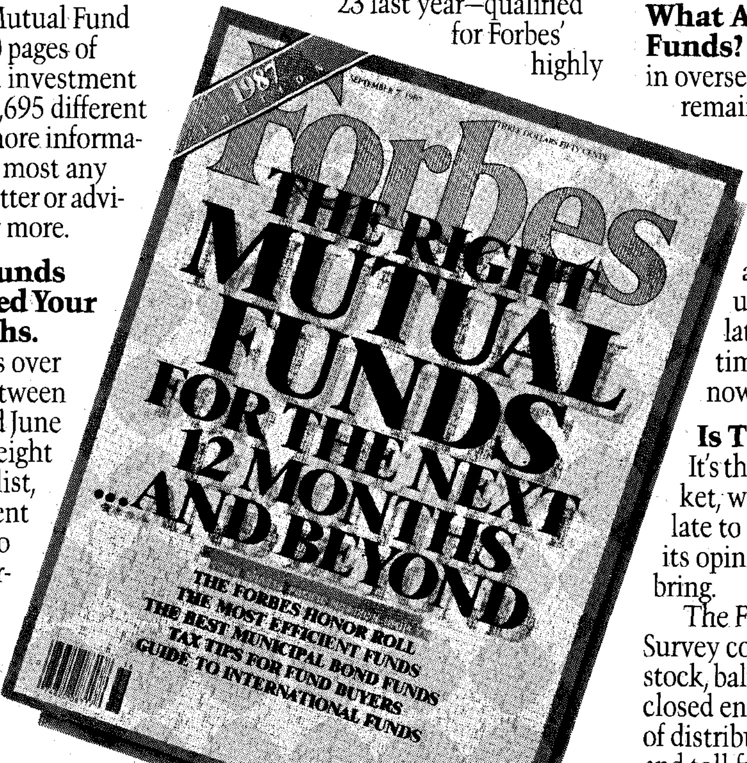
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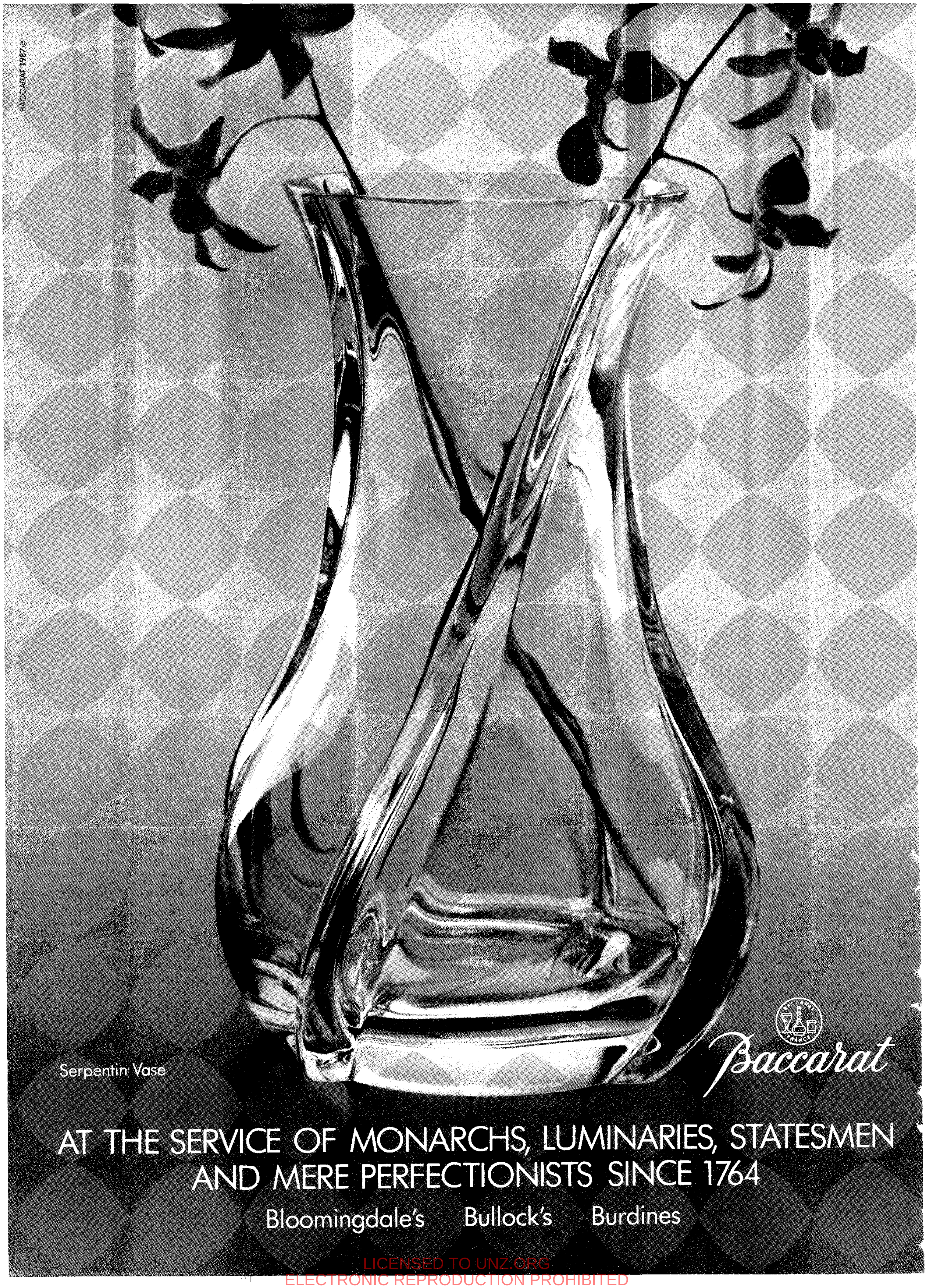
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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

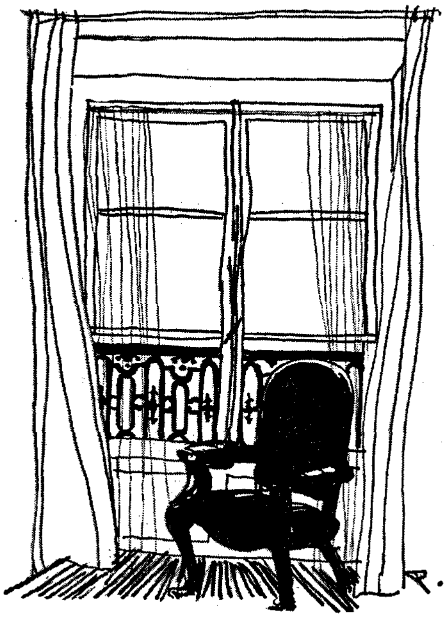
IT'S hard to just ♥ New York while the city continues to ♣ New Yorkers over the head. By the time you read these words, the Regency Theatre, on Broadway at Sixty-seventh Street, the last old-run movie house on the upper West Side, will be closing its doors—so that it can undergo refurbishment and reopen in a month or so as a first-run-movie theatre, with a new, wide screen. There are now only four revival houses left in Manhattan, all of them south of Fourteenth Street: two in the Village, two in SoHo. Five years ago, Manhattan had ten revival theatres, three of them on the upper West Side.

The Regency may not be completely gone; there's talk of running some of its programs at another uptown theatre. (Fingers are crossed.) And there's no one to just plain hate in the Regency closing: the Cineplex Odeon people, who are taking it over—they're a Toronto-based chain that has recently been buying up New York movie theatres by the handful—install plush seats and thick carpeting in the old houses they acquire, and pour real melted butter on their popcorn. All the same, the loss of the Regency, only four months after the closing of the Thalia, raises some civic issues that New Yorkers will have to face up to:

• The old assumption of urban sociologists that city size is linked to the availability of certain amenities no longer obtains. According to a 1930 chart ("Size of City Necessary for 95% Certainty of Having Specified Services") printed by the magazine *Social Forces*, almost any town of ten thousand will boast at least a candy store and a restaurant, while a small city of a hundred thousand will provide a bookstore, a hospital, and an Elks Club, and a big city of a million or more should offer you a zoo, a symphony orchestra, and a municipal swimming pool. But cultural treasures aren't bestowed automatically anymore, like birthdays or rainbows. You have to raise them up, like children.

• New Yorkers have been subjected to so many losses in recent years that they've got pessimistic about the place without realizing it. One friend of ours reacted to the news of the Regency closing with shock, hurt, and sadness, almost with horror, then smiled and said, "Well, I guess we'll just have to wait until the cycles of time make it possible for another such place to open up here, in about three hundred years." Too late—we have other plans for our three-hundredth birthday.

• It seems to be a moment to apply the Public Library solution. Early in this century, in a rare local instance of experiential planning, some good-hearted New Yorkers decided that we needed to acquire great quantities of books and distribute them all over the city. Because of the continuing existence of New York's branch libraries, a book of some kind is usually within reach in almost every neighborhood. Now that nothing happens automatically anymore, we have to ask ourselves the question "What experiences do we want to have available for people in most neighborhoods?" A place like the Regency is tricky to duplicate. It provided lovability, for instance, because it was intimate enough and welcoming enough to give you the sense that you were watching a movie with a group of friends. And durability, because you could count on its being there whenever you wanted it.



• New York is New York only because it has brains—because, thanks to the enriching, eclectic activities it makes available, a vast pool of talented young people keeps turning into national leaders in the arts, the law, fashion, business, advertising. When we talked to one young writer about what she'd gained over the years from watching Sturges or Hitchcock movies at the Regency, she said, "It was so effortless and ordinary to go to old movies there—they always had good prints, and the original stills out in the lobby—that you felt as if you were at a first-run picture that happened to have been made forty-five years ago. I even liked just looking up the movie listings in the paper and seeing that a real favorite—like 'The Lady Eve'—was back. It was good to know that people were at the Regency watching it that week, maybe for the first time."

• •

Nails

THE reason to get to the bottom of this nail business is that otherwise the city can be a complete mystery. You are standing on the corner; things are dirty or not, unbearably hot or not; and you look up and, just at the level above where you had been looking before, there is a nail salon. Try it. Go outside and look at what you look at first. Then look up. Not *all the way* up. We're not talking about the *sky* here. Now, what do you see? A nail salon. Exactly.

From Mercedes at Times Nail (go to Times Square at Forty-second Street, look up) we have a description of what happens at a nail salon—or, rather, what process on the part of the *nail worker* is involved. We give the basic process (five dollars and twenty cents). Where our conversation with Mercedes was in Spanish, we give a translation.

Process	Translation
1. Remove.	
2. File.	
3. *Pongo la mano* in the *agua*.	I put the hand in the water.
4. Other hand.	
5. I cut the cuticle.	
6. Put cream, give you a massage.	
7. *La base.*	The base.
8. The other hand—*hago lo mismo.*	I do the same.
9. When I have both hands ready, I put on the top.	

When you walk into Times Nail, you see an ordinary-looking room with plenty of air and light. There are ample windows (a good, big window that can support a sign is one of the requisites of a nail salon); there is a feeling of spaciousness, because the nine-step operation described by Mercedes doesn't take up a lot of room. Mercedes sits at a small table. It almost seems like a miniature. The whole nail-salon business almost seems like a miniature. It almost seems like something that is being done for fun, although it may also be a part of the alarming trend toward separation: the separation of things that really work from things that don't work anymore. A nail salon doesn't have big start-up costs, and no license is necessary, and you can run it without understanding English down to the last detail. It is a self-explanatory business. Everyone understands what is going to happen. The owner of Times Nail is a young woman called Joy Hong. She told us that the nail-salon business has real advantages for people who are learning English, like our acquaintance Mercedes. Mercedes is studying English. She had a book in her lap. She is from Cartagena, Colombia, where there are no nail salons. She is shy at moments, but always intelligent and aware. We asked her what she was reading. It was this paragraph in an English-study book: "*Ya hemos enseñado que los dos verbos más importantes del idioma inglés son los verbos* to be *y* to have," which means, "We have already demonstrated that the two most important verbs of the English language are the verbs *to be* and *to have*."

IT'S not too soon to talk to people who have memories of nail salons. "This is where I stood and watched for about forty-five minutes, three months ago," a young man told us. We were standing on Fifty-eighth Street just east of Fifth Avenue. "Let's stand here and watch. They are right up there. Occasionally, you'll see women gliding by the windows. The faces are what I watch, and the way they use their hands. Something wonderful is going on. It's not luminous; beauty is not what is going on in their faces, I think. Stand here and watch them as they leave; watch their hands. Here's someone—I wonder if she's going to use her hands. They don't want to really handle anything; they hold their hands out, the fingers are spread. She's being less careful. Here's another one; she's being careful. We haven't seen an extreme case. *Now, here:* the right hand is chopping at the left hand; she is rubbing the palms. *There's a face!* There is something about being touched with no affectionate purpose, but affectionately."

"The way barbers were for men who got a shave every day," we said.

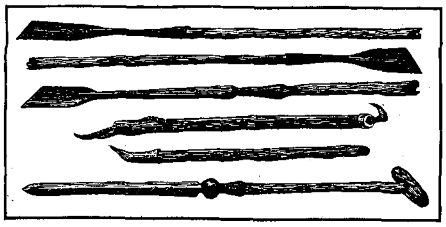
"I've never done that. My father used to do that a lot."

We felt the pressure of nail salons all around us: Pikaso 2 Nail (Sixth Avenue between Forty-sixth and Forty-seventh, second floor); AAA Fingernail (Fifth Avenue between Forty-seventh and Forty-eighth, second floor); A.C.I. Fingernail (next block up on Fifth, second floor). Everywhere, *not quite secretly*, women were going through the process.

"I have watched my mother, at seven in the morning," our friend said, "making a very intense, intricate motion with her fingers, using something like an Eskimo's tool—very delicate. This tool was like a spoon with the sides cut off, concave at the end, with two barbs coming out from the sides. She was cutting her cuticles. It reminded me of the tools Melville talked about in 'Moby Dick.' "

"Now, really," we said.

"I will bring you an illustration," he said. He did. Here it is:



Bungalow Colony

"MY whole life flashes in front of me when Sheli Gitlitz opens her mouth!" Andrea Hall cried out when she saw her childhood friend at the reunion of the East Pond Bungalow Colony twenty years after it closed. Reuniting over fifty people who were children in the heyday of the East Pond Bungalow Colony—from the mid-fifties until the mid-sixties, the peak period of bungalow-colony activity in the Catskills—was the idea of Sue Fein D'Entrone, whose family also once rented a summer bungalow at East Pond. Mrs. D'Entrone had met us at the door of a banquet room she'd rented for the occasion, at a Ramada Inn near the New York–New Jersey border, and she had soon become fully occupied with the arrival of a stream of people, some of whom she hadn't seen in almost twenty-five years.

"There's Stuie," said Sheli Gitlitz, still in the grip of her friend Andrea. A man in his late thirties, wearing a powder-pink sports jacket with white slacks and white shoes, swept across the dance floor with a dramatically attired woman unfamiliar to the East Pond crowd. "He was the biggest heartthrob," Sheli said. "Leave it to him to show up with *that blonde*."

While Mrs. D'Entrone circulated through the room with a photograph album full of memorable scenes of bungalow-colony life, we asked Andrea and Sheli why children of families who had spent time in this bungalow colony would seek to reunite.

"East Pond was the hottest bungalow colony in Sullivan County," Andrea said. "The swingingest. It wasn't that the place was so beautiful—the crowd made the place. We all came from different boroughs, or from the suburbs, and, financially speaking, not everybody came from the same walk of life. But we all shared the same kind of bungalow. And even though we only spent two months of the year together you got to know everyone. Every mother was your mother."

A d.j. known as Doo Wop Al, who had been hired for the party, was spinning records, and a buffet dinner was offered, but for a while neither could compete with the accounting that goes on at reunions: the nerd of 1962 is now a successful lawyer; the biggest wise guy now works in his father's business; the ladies' man now sells dentures; who's married, who isn't, who was and now isn't. Then Doo Wop Al put on a 1963 hit, "Easier Said Than Done," and the dance floor filled up. A tall woman with very red hair went up to the d.j.'s table, commandeered the microphone, and began singing along with the record.

After the tall woman put down the mike, Mrs. D'Entrone went up and showed her a photograph in the album. "This really kills me," said the tall woman, who was introduced to us as Brenda Bergman. We looked over her shoulder and saw a picture of a young Brenda Bergman in an East Pond production of "Gypsy," circa 1962. "I could have been the lead," she said, "but the lead boy called me fat and I quit." Brenda then told us that she had become a professional singer and played the cabaret circuit in New York, with groups known as Brenda Bergman and Her Reality and Brenda Bergman and the Real-Tones, but that she was now a show-business stylist and lived in New Orleans. "So, you see, it turns around," she said, "and let me tell you, when a fat person turns around, watch out!" She laughed.

Andrea Hall's brother Richie had arrived on his own and was having a smashing good time reminiscing with a group of other guys in their thirties. Richie introduced them—"This is Be-Bop, Lubinsky, and Slutsky," he said—and then took us aside to explain the attractions of East Pond.

"Our family went there for fifteen years," he said. "We started a couple of years after it opened, and stayed through three different owners, right up until the last year. Back then, the Catskills were the *Catskills*. There were no alternatives for a summer vacation with the family. Nobody went to the Hamptons. There wasn't enough money to do anything but pack up and head for the Catskills. To people who didn't grow up in this area, and in this era, the idea of a bungalow *colony* is exotic—or maybe unattractive. But us kids—we liked the close-knit feeling. During the week, the fathers weren't around—they were back in the city, working—and the mothers were busy playing mah-jongg or cards, so the kids were together all the time. And you got to play ball or go to socials non-stop for two months. You really *lived* with these people. And then came the weekends, and suddenly the parents went wild. The clearest recollection I have of my father when I was a kid was seeing him arrive at East Pond late in the day on Saturday, still dressed in his work clothes, dead tired. He'd have something to eat, and then he'd change and go to the show at the casino. They had some fantastic shows there, because in those days you could get some big acts from the hotels who would play the bungalow colonies for a few extra bucks after the hotel show. So we had shows that went on after midnight and didn't end until 3, 4 A.M. Jackie Mason played there and got booed off the stage. Rodney Dangerfield once played an entire show in his underwear. There wasn't a bungalow colony like it in the whole area."

Andrea reappeared and invited us to join her the following day for a drive up to the site of the East Pond Bungalow Colony, and we went. A bungalow colony was still there, we found. It is now called Silver Pond, and is run by the Bobover Yeshiva, of Williamsburg. There are still about a dozen two-family bungalows ranged in a circle around a lawn, just as Andrea remembered. Chassidic boys and girls were making crazy-eight figures on their BMX bicycles on a basketball court that had apparently not been used in many years. An area that had once been the baseball field was muddy after a recent rain.

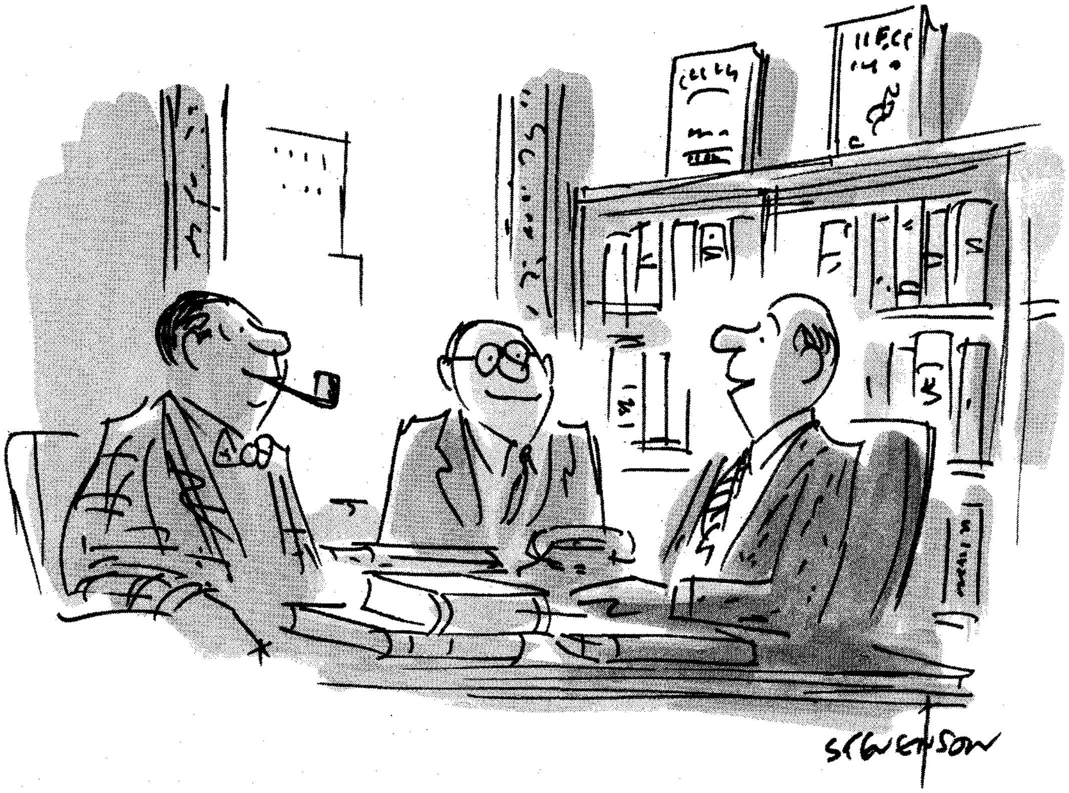
Before heading back to the city, we made a quick trip to the neighboring town of Kiamesha, where Andrea's parents now spend their summers. Andrea gave her mother, who was sitting on her porch, an account of the East Pond reunion and went on to express disappointment over the state of affairs at what is now Silver Pond. "The whole lower area is muddy, and it doesn't look at all like what I remembered," she said.

"Oh, Andrea," her mother said, swatting the air with her hand. "It was always a swamp."

Quarter-Eaters

A FRIEND writes:

When video games were at the height of their popularity, I re-



"Say, how about a book by Koch, O'Connor, and Bob Hope?"

"Lionel's been calling for more minesweepers for years."

mained sensibly distant while all the other people in the bar or the movie lobby fed Pac-Man and Space Invaders quarters, so they could eat berries with their blobs or beam space monsters into tiny fragments. But now it's skill cranes—large, aquarium-like machines filled with stuffed animals you can take home if you maneuver the crane into the right position. And because I get a tangible reward for my efforts if things work out at skill crane it doesn't seem nearly as pointless as the other quarter-eaters.

Here are some of the valuable prizes I've won: three blue spuds, Pink Panther (ten inches high), pink toucan, panda wearing yellow overalls, turquoise clip-on rabbit, tiger with orange shirt, pink-and-red centipede, blue unicorn, penguin with red bow tie, doll in orange gingham dress, monkey boy sucking thumb, three white bears, stuffed rainbow, blue nylon parrot, blue rabbit, Pinocchio doll, purple bear in red overalls, lion in yellow shirt, purple nylon elephant, turquoise bear with yellow hat, koala, clip-on peanut with red cape and yellow sneakers, blue elephant with purple ears, troll with red hair, green cat, bear in denim overalls, dog with blue ribbon, windup tennis shoes.

Skill cranes have been around for a long time—my dad won a glass dog for me at the state fair once, and people tell me cranes have been at Coney Island for years—but now they're everywhere: on New York street corners and in grocery stores, bars, and movie theatres across the country, except where the law says they're gambling.

I'd been trying to win since Christmas. My friends warned me that it wasn't possible. But at a bar in Philadelphia this spring I saw a woman work and work and finally win a panda, and even though the little thing was sort of silly-looking in the hands of a grown woman she was ecstatic about it. So a few cranes—and five, maybe ten dollars' worth of quarters—later I was still trying to retrieve some dumb little thing for myself. Then, one night, I put four quarters in and—all right, a friend had already moved a panda into a good position—I, or, rather, the claws of the crane, clutched the little animal and swung around and dropped it into the chute. And right away I knew I could do it again.

I've since talked to a guy, Artie, who says he's been playing coin-operated games twenty years of the twenty-seven he's been alive, and who works at a vending-related company. I didn't tell Artie what a whiz I'd come to be, but I gave him a hypothetical situation: Suppose enough people got good enough to win a toy every fifty cents or so. I had a theory that if everyone, or even just a few people, got somewhat good at the machines, the machines wouldn't be profitable anymore.

Artie laughed. "Most people give up quicker than that," he said. "They put in fifty cents, a dollar, don't come up with anything, and walk on."

"But what if they really practice?" I asked.

"No one has that kind of coördination—not even Superman," he said. "These things are programmed for a very high level of skill."

"O.K., Artie, but *what if*? Are these distributors getting toys so cheap they can afford to give them away?"

"They're nice toys," he said. "Not junk. That's one reason the cranes are so popular now."

But what I felt after winning that first panda was something else—a sort of power. The crane became an extension of my hand. And my brother noticed I did better when I talked to it. I wasn't *really* talking to it, just aloud.

I'd say I averaged three or four toys a week for the next few months, and sometimes it got embarrassing, what with all the little kids hanging around. But Steve Prowler, at *Vending Times*, assured me that the games were for all ages—that they were very popular at truck stops.

I was in the Midwest this summer, and just before I left, my friends and I spent a Sunday afternoon on a crane spree. At the bowling alley, I only picked up some real uglies: the stuffed rainbow, the family of plush spuds. But at the grocery store the crane power was with me. I even pulled out the big, pretty things they put in just to tempt you: the Pinocchio, the Pink Panther, and a big gray seal.

Back in New York, on the street corners in my neighborhood, the game is played a little differently. People have no qualms about tipping the whole machine to get the toys into better positions (cranes don't tilt), and when it's your turn they stand around and coach you. I don't know why, but that seems to totally wipe out the crane power.

LA BAMBA HOT LINE

"HELLO. La Bamba Hot Line."

"Is it true that 'La Bamba' is derived from the Icelandic Younger Edda, set to music by Spanish sailors and transported via the Caribbean to America in 1665?"

"No, not even close. La Bamba Hot Line. Go ahead, please."

"When is the next Louie Louie Parade scheduled?"

"You want the Louie Louie Hot Line. This is the La Bamba Hot Line."

"Oh."

"La Bamba Hot Line."

"This is Senator Sethspeaks in Washington, on the Committee for the Investigation of Obscene Rock Lyrics."

"State your business, please."

"Uh—I was wondering, just what are the words to 'La Bamba'?"

"Do you have the record?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, listen to it."

"But I can't tell if the words are obscene or not."

"That's your problem. La Bamba Hot Line."

"My teen-age daughter has been acting funny lately. She refuses to eat, and she has frown lines on her face. She's become aggressive with her parrot and when you talk to her she just says everything is geeky. The doctor can't find anything wrong with her. What should I do?"

"I'm glad you asked. The La Bamba Hot Line has a special pamphlet dealing with problems of teen-agers. Just send a self-addressed stamped envelope to La Bamba Hot Line, P.O. Box 4700. But first, I'd have a heart-to-heart with that parrot."

"Much obliged."

"Likewise, I'm sure. La Bamba Hot Line."

"This is Phil Donahue. Is it true that the La Bamba Hot Line is having a lip-sync contest?"

"Absolutely. October the ninth."

"What do I have to do to win?"

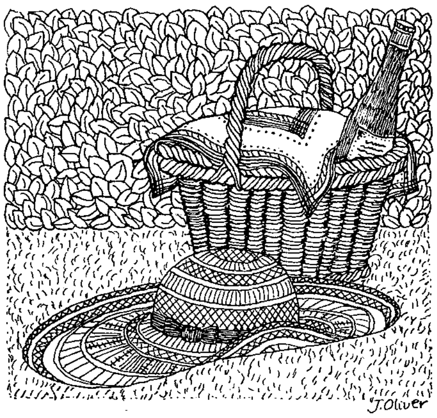
"What do you think? Perform 'La Bamba' till your eyes bug out, do it like a rockin' fool, blow the house down."

"Do you think I've got a chance?"

"Everybody has a chance in life, Mr. Donahue."

YOU wouldn't believe the stuff I get on the La Bamba Hot Line. I work twelve to four. It's an intensive job and can burn you out quick. Two short breaks, while all the calls stack up. They get a message, "All the La Bamba Hot Lines are temporarily busy. Please try again." It's unfair that people have to keep calling and calling, dialling till their nails split in order to get the La Bamba Hot Line. We need help! We need somebody to handle the genuine emergencies, weed out the crazies. The things people want to know: they want to know are they going to get cancer, will the plane they have a ticket on for tomorrow crash, which stores are giving double coupons this week? We try to answer what we can, but I mean we're not God. I tell them play "La Bamba" thirty-two times in a dark room, then improvise thirty-two versions, then listen to it standing on their head. I tell them to walk down the street muttering "*Yo no soy marinero/Soy capitán.*" Count the number of people who recognize the lines and multiply by four, and whatever number that is, that's Ollie North's secret Swiss bank account. I mean, some things are so simple you wonder why anybody would bother calling up. We deal with a lot of that. Little kids call just to be funny, try to catch us off guard. Is your refrigerator running, that kind of thing. I'm on to them. I start screaming a wild, cacophonous sort of schizo "La Bamba." Blows them right out of the water.

But mostly it's scholars. Academic stuff. People wanting to know about roots, symbolism, the double-entendre of the *marinero/capitán* lines, etc. Idea stuff. I spend my mornings at the library just to stay even with these people. Man, they're sharp. One guy had a beaut—a positive beaut. The way he traced the Paul-is-dead hoax back to the lost Shakespearean sonnets, twisting it around and back through "Poor Ritchie's Almanac" straight up to the chord progressions of "La Bamba"—it was breathtaking. The switchboard was lit up like the stars in the open desert sky on a clear night while I listened and kept all those calls on hold. I was humbled right to my knees. Unfortunately, his spiel didn't get recorded and I didn't get the guy's name. But he'll call again. I'm sure he will.



Some of the ideas that come in are just junk, of course. Did Idi Amin record "La Bamba"? Of course not. But former President Jimmy Carter did. Some stuff you hear is so unbelievable. No, the Voyager is not carrying "La Bamba" out to the end of the universe. Don't I wish. That's sort of my job really, to carry "La Bamba" to the end of the universe.

MY boyfriend is giving me a hard time. He says I take my work too seriously. We'll be watching "Washington Week in Review" and I'll say, "Look at those guys. Talk about serious. Don't they ever get down?" He says, "All day it's your La Bamba duties, your La Bamba research, your La Bamba outfits. You go off in the morning with your La Bamba briefcase. When are we ever going to talk about us?"

He says, "This La Bamba thing is going to blow over any minute. It may be blown over by Friday. Things are that fast these days."

"Don't say that!" I cry. "Buddy Holly. 'American Pie.' The Big Bopper. Elvis. Things last longer than you think."

We're going through crisis time, I guess. But we'll work it out. I have faith in that. Right now, my work is at a critical juncture. I'm talking demographics. Market potentializing. La Bamba aerobics, theme weddings, instructional software. We were represented at the harmonic convergence. We met on the boardwalk at Atlantic City, an overflow crowd of La Bamba regulars. We played the song over and over and concentrated on fibre optics, sending our vibes out all over the universe.

The special thing is, my boyfriend can sing "La Bamba." He's not allowed to enter the lip-sync contest because it would be sort of a conflict of interest. He doesn't just lip-sync. He sings it a cappella. He sounds so sincere when he sings it. He makes up the words—he's not a purist—but they sound right; he has the right tune. That is the secret of "La Bamba," inventing it as you go along. That is the true soul of La Bamba. La Bamba lives.

—BOBBIE ANN MASON

REACH FOR THE SKY

GUY comes into the shelter this last Thursday, a kid, really, maybe doing it for his dad, with a female golden/Labrador cross, two or three years old. He's embarrassed, not ready for forms and questions, but we get dogs like this all the time, and I'm not letting him off the hook, not letting him out of here before I know he knows that we have to kill a lot of these dogs, dogs like his. Her name is Rita and he says, "Rita, sit!," like being here is part of her ongoing training. Rita sits halfway and then stands again, and looks at him in that tuned-in way goldens have.

"So . . ." The kid looks at the forms I've got on the counter, like no one told him this was part of the deal. He looks up at the sampler that the sister of the regional boss did for our office: "A Man Knows Only as Much as He's Suffered—St. Francis of Assisi." He has no answers whatsoever for the form. She's two, he thinks. Housebroken. Some shots. His dad handled all that stuff. She's spayed. Reason for Surrender: she plays too rough.

She smashed this huge lamp, the kid says. Of one of those mariners with the pipe and the yellow bad-weather outfit. His dad made it in a ceramics class.

Rita looks over at me with bright interest. The kid adds, "And she's got this thing with her back legs, she limps pretty bad. The vet said she wouldn't get any better."

"What vet?" I ask. I'm not supposed to push too hard, it's no better if they abandon them on highways, but we get sixty dogs a day here, and if I can talk any of them back into their houses, great. "The vet couldn't do anything?"

"We don't have the money," the kid says.

I ask to see Rita's limp. The kid's vague, and Rita refuses to demonstrate. Her tail thumps the floor twice.

I explain the bottom of the form to the kid: when he signs it, he's giving us permission to have the dog put down if it comes to that.

"She's a good dog," he says helpfully. "She'll probably get someone to like her."

So I do the animal-shelter Joe Friday, which never works: "Maybe. But we get ten goldens per week. And everybody wants puppies."

"O.K., well, good luck," the kid says. He signs something on the line that looks like "Fleen." Rita looks at him. He takes the leash with him, wrapping it around his forearm. At the door he says, "You be a good girl, now." Rita pants a little with a neutral expression, processing the information.

It used to be you would get owners all the time who were teary and broken up: they needed to know their dog was going to get a good home, you had to guarantee it, they needed to make their problem yours, so that they could say, Hey, when *I* left the dog it was fine.

Their dog would always make a great pet for somebody, their dog was always great with kids, their dog always needed A Good Home and Plenty of Room to Run. Their dog, they were pretty sure, would always be the one we'd have no trouble placing in a nice family. And when they got to the part about signing the release form for euthanasia, only once did someone, a little girl, suggest that if it came to that they should be called back, and they'd retrieve the dog. Her mother had asked me if I had any ideas, and the girl suggested that. Her mother said, "I asked *him* if *he* had any ideas."

Now you get kids; the parents don't even bring the dogs in. Behind the kid with the golden/Lab mix there's a girl who's maybe seventeen or eighteen. Benetton top, Benetton skirt, straw-blond hair, tennis tan, she's got a Doberman puppy. Bizarre dog for a girl like that. Chews everything, she says. She holds the puppy like a baby. As if to coöperate, the dog twists and squirms around in her arms trying to get at the penholder to show what it can do.

Puppies chew things, I tell her, and she rolls her eyes like she knows *that.* I tell her how many dogs come in every day. I lie. I say we've had four Doberman puppies for weeks now. She says, "There're forms or something, or I just leave him?" She slides him on his back gently across the counter. His paws are in the air and he looks a little bewildered.

"If I showed you how to make him stop chewing things, would you take him back?" I ask her. The Doberman has sprawled around and got to his feet, taller now than we are, nails clicking tentatively on the counter.

"No," she says. She signs the form, annoyed by a sweep of hair that keeps falling forward. "We're moving, anyhow." She pats the dog on the muzzle as a goodbye and he nips at her, his feet slipping and sliding like a skater's. "God," she says. She's mad at me now, too, the way people get mad at those pictures that come in the mail of dogs and cats looking at you with their noses through the chain-link fences: *Help Skipper, who lived on leather for three weeks.*

When I come back from taking the Doberman downstairs there's a middle-aged guy at the counter in a wheelchair. An Irish setter circles back and forth around the chair, winding and unwinding the black nylon leash across the guy's chest. Somebody's put some time into grooming this dog, and when the sun hits that red coat just right he looks like a million dollars.

I'm not used to wheelchair people. The guy says, "I gotta get rid of the dog."

What do you say to a guy like that: Can't you take care of him? Too much trouble? The setter's got to be eight years old.

"Is he healthy?" I ask.

"She," he says. "She's in good shape."

"Landlord problem?" I say. The guy says nothing.

"What's her name?" I ask.

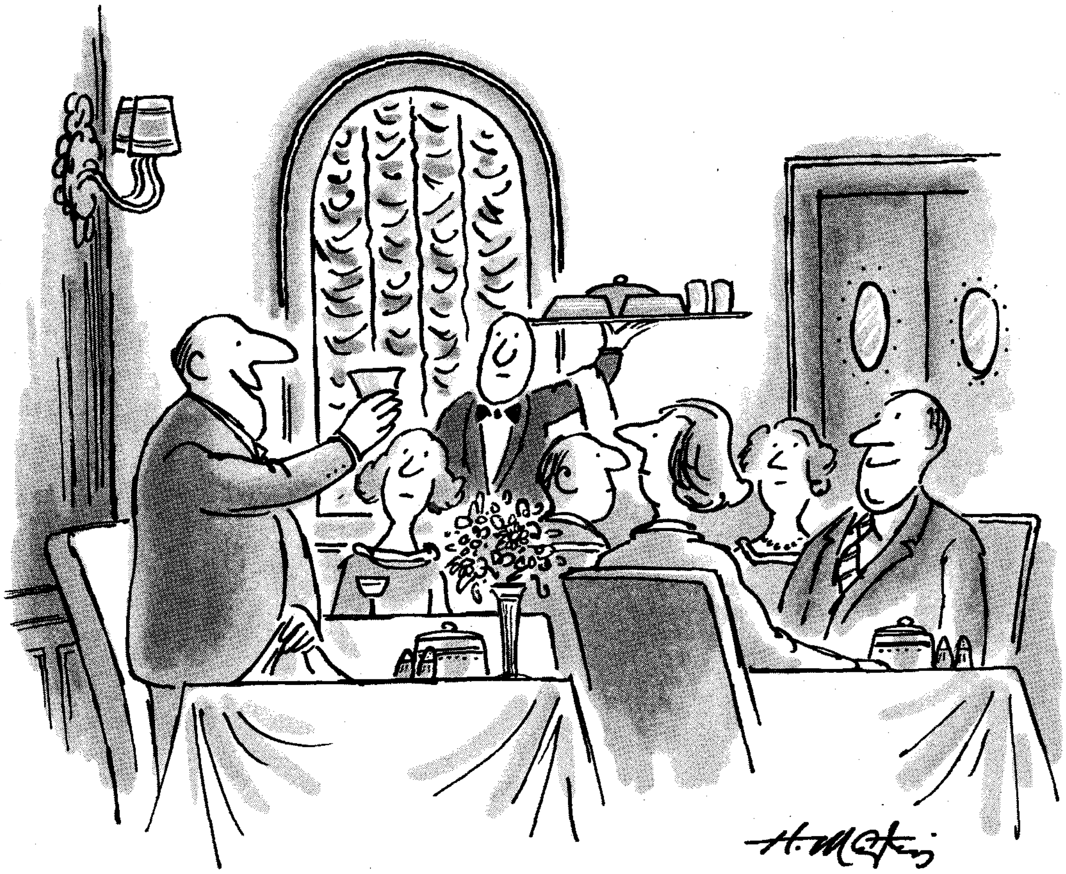
"We gotta have a discussion?" the guy says. I think, This is what wheelchair people are like. The setter whines and stands her front paws on the arm of the guy's chair.

"We got forms," I say. I put them on the counter, not so close that he doesn't have to reach. He starts to sit up higher and then leans back.

"What's it say?" he says.

"Sex," I say.

"Female," he says.



“Ladies and gentlemen, I’d like to wish the lady at Table 5 a happy birthday, the couple at Table 13 a happy anniversary, the gentleman at Table 2 a pleasant retirement, and the couple at Table 8 good luck with their steak béarnaise.”

• •

Breed? Irish setter. Age? Eleven.

Eleven! I can feel this dog on the back of my neck. On my forehead. I can just see myself selling this eleven-year-old dog to the families that come in looking. And how long has she been with him?

I walk back and forth behind the counter, hoist myself up, flex my legs.

The guy goes, like he hasn’t noticed any of that, “She does tricks.”

“Tricks?” I say.

“Ellie,” he says. He mimes a gun with his forefinger and thumb and points it at her. “Ellie. Reach for the sky.”

Ellie is all attention. Ellie sits, and then rears up, lifting her front paws as high as a dog can lift them, edging forward in little hops from the exertion.

“Reach for the sky, Ellie,” he says.

Ellie holds it for a second longer, like those old poodles on “The Ed Sullivan Show,” and then falls back down and wags her tail at having pulled it off.

“I need a Reason for Surrender,” I say. “That’s what we call it.”

“Well, you’re not going to get one,” the guy says. He edges a wheel of his chair back and forth, turning it a little this way and that.

“Then I can’t take the dog,” I say.

“Then I’ll just let her go when I get out the door,” the guy says.

“If I were you I’d keep that dog,” I say.

“If you were me you would’ve wheeled this thing off a bridge eleven years ago,” the guy says. “If you were me you wouldn’t be such an asshole. If you were me you would’ve taken this dog, no questions asked.”

We’re at an impasse, this guy and me.

He’s let go of Ellie’s leash, and Ellie’s covering all the corners of the office, sniffing. There’s a woman in the waiting area behind him with a bull-terrier puppy on her lap and the puppy’s keeping a close eye on Ellie.

“Do you have any relatives or whatever who could take the dog?” I ask him.

The guy looks at me. “Do I sign something?” he says.

I can’t help it, when I’m showing him where to sign I can’t keep the words back, I keep thinking of Ellie reaching for the sky: “It’s better this way. We’ll try and find her a home with someone who’s equipped to handle her.”

The guy doesn’t come back at me. He signs the thing and hands me my pen, and says, “Hey Ellie, hey kid,” and Ellie comes right over. He picks up her trailing leash and flops the end onto the counter where I can grab it, and then hugs her around the neck until she twists a little and pulls away.

“She doesn’t know what’s going on,” I say.

He looks up at me and I point, as if to say, “Her.”

The guy wheels the chair around and heads for the door. The woman with the bull terrier watches him go by with big eyes. I can’t see his face, but it must be something. Ellie barks. There’s no way to fix this.

I’ve got A.S.P.C.A. pamphlets unboxed and all over the counter. I’ve got impound forms to finish by today.

“Nobody’s gonna want this dog,” I call after him. I can’t help it.

It’s just me now, at the counter. The woman stands up, holding the bull terrier against her chest, and stops, like she’s not going to turn him over, like whatever her reasons are, they may not be good enough. —Jim Shepard

•

Richmond’s all-time hottest July day was Aug. 6, 1918, Linton said, when the mercury climbed to 107.—*Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch.*

Heat got you, Linton?

LINGO

WHEN Alex first started as a barber he was told by Captain Piggy Booter that he had begun at the top. He was apprenticed at Stumpers, in Savile Row, where Guards officers and millionaire stockbrokers and private-income young clubmen who ran up long-overdue accounts liked to go. He was interested by hairdressing and much struck by his clients' way of interrupting themselves in a stream of the fatuous to talk about a private concern to a stranger.

"I always think that 'Stumpers' is one of those words that describes itself, don't you?" said Piggy Booter, who was in the Grenadiers. Where his nickname had come from was unknown but it was used incorrigibly by almost everyone who knew him except his mother. She addressed him in full as Percival Peregrine when she was conveying her disappointment in him. The disappointment had been without remission in the hectoring dismay of her widowhood, starting from when he was ten. Piggy now was tall and good-looking, with a high forehead, and not at all like a piglet.

Alex went on shampooing the Captain, careful not to get soap into his eyes. The suds could readily have found their way there because of the forehead's incline.

"You know what one means," said Captain Booter. "Onomato thing. 'Stumpers' sounds just like what it is. Only place to go. Statement of fact."

Alex rinsed. "Should we finish with the cold, sir?"

"One always says yes on trust but one's never known what it's for. You're the man to enlighten."

"It leaves the hair shiny, sir."

"You remember one's getting married." A pause. Alex went on rinsing, making sure that the water wasn't icy, knowing that more would be said.

"The thing is," said the Captain, "one's not good enough for her." He looked much troubled. "There's something she can't say and one's not up to snuff about what's going on in her mind. What would you do?"

Alex recognized urgency in the language fog. "If you'd like to say more, sir?"

"There's the pressure of the church being booked and the announcement in the *Times* and presents arriving by the bushel. It's not as if one could stop anything now. Let alone that one wants to. Why should she be so down?"

"Because she feels the pressure on you, sir?"

"Can't be that. She's a tower of strength. But only the other day one told her how building she was and she burst into tears."

"Building, sir?"

"You know. Building. Sort of person who builds one up." Pause. "She's got a marvellous character."

Alex towel-dried the Captain's hair. "The auspices sound good, sir."

"Wish *you* could meet her and talk to her," said the Captain. Pause. "To come back to Stumpers, sort of thing one meant was that the name's got a lot in common with Harry Piccers."

Alex wondered if Harry Piccers was to be the best man.

"One's often thought how massively central Stumpers is. Might almost be in Harry Piccers."

Alex wrapped the Captain's head in a fresh towel and deduced Piccadilly.

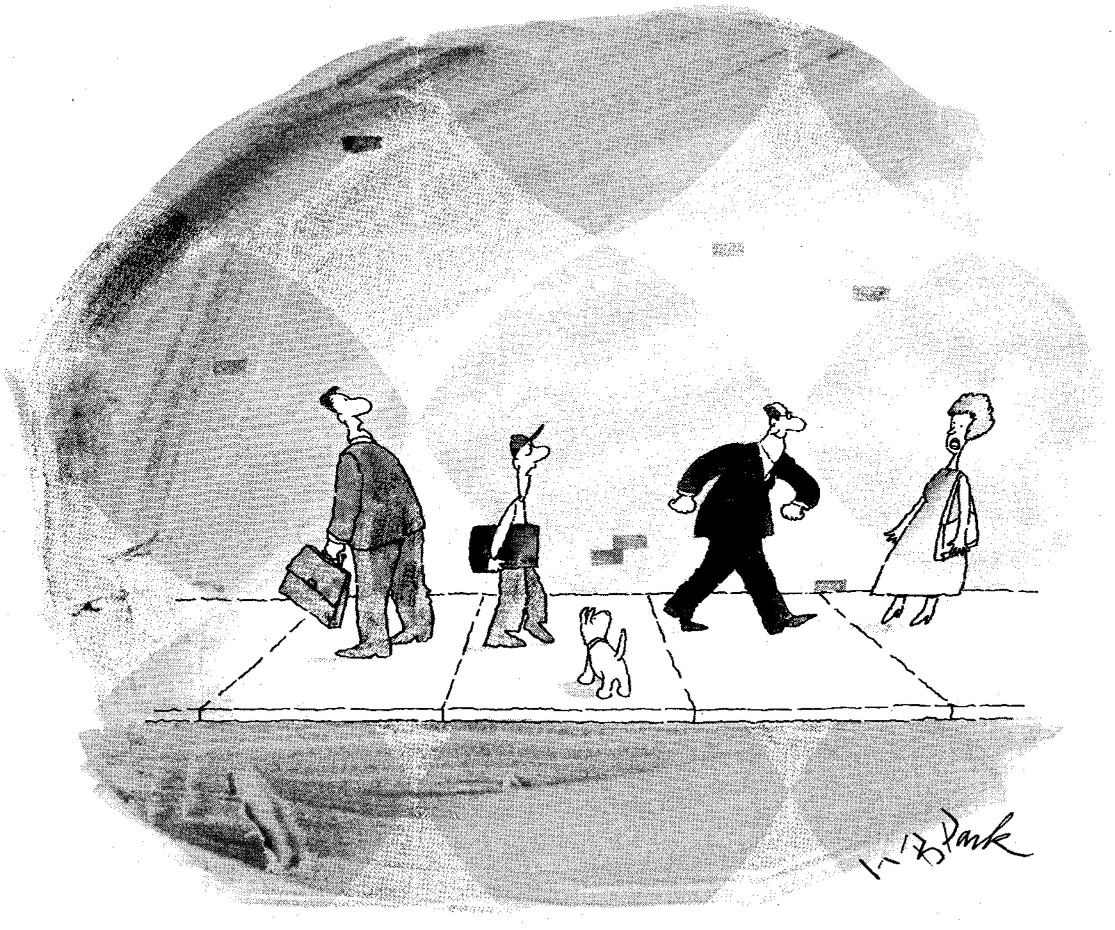
"What we all like about coming here is that one doesn't have to chat. Lot of places let one in for a fiendish amount of chat when one's trying one's level best to think."

Of course, he is very young, thought Alex. Captain Booter was twenty-two. Alex was nineteen.

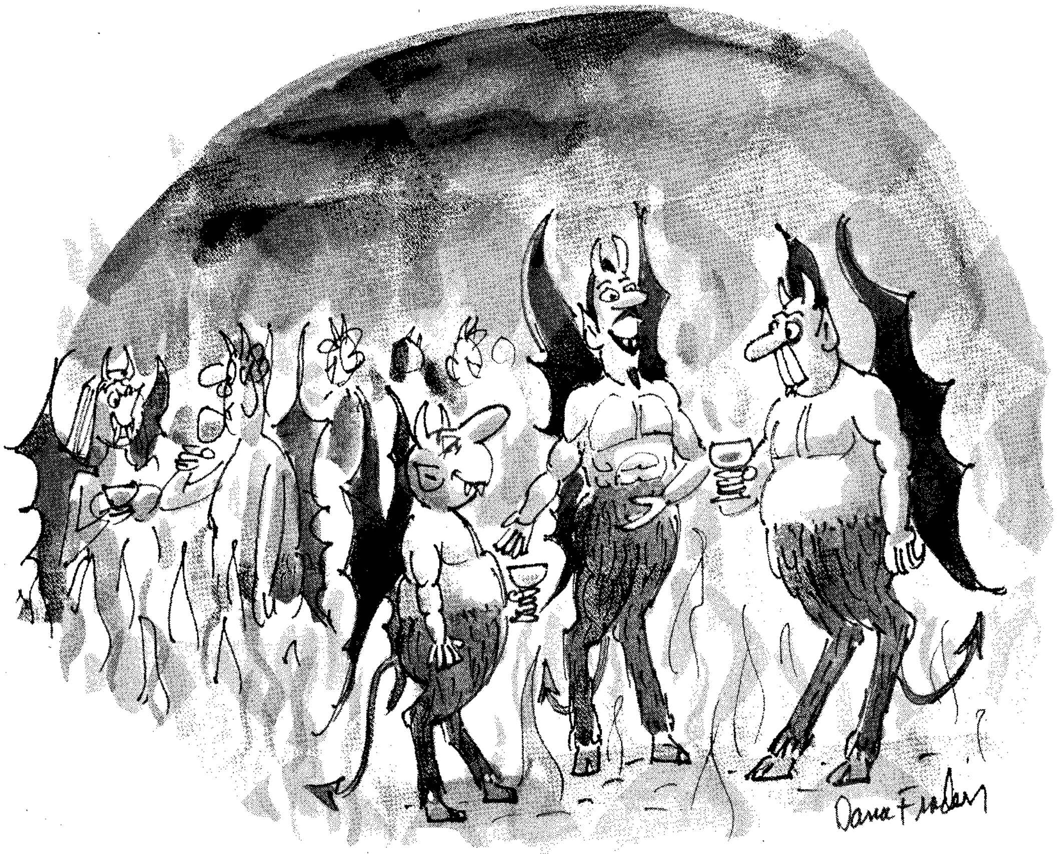
"What should one do about what's on the mind of one's wedded-wife-to-be, Alex?"

"Ask her, sir?" Alex started to razor-cut Captain Booter's hair. He had to stop for a moment after his suggestion, because the Captain was turning his head to and fro quite violently, as though a thought in his mind were a billiard ball to be bounced off several points before it fell into a pocket.

Silence. The motion ceased and Alex was able to razor again. "I



The Man with the Purposeful Stride



"And I believe you know Demon Rum."

• •

say," said the Captain, "how fast does one's hair grow?"

Alex detected a real wish to ask about someone else's interest. "An average of half an inch a month, sir. In your case it seems a lot more."

"You do like this hair business, don't you?"

"I do," said Alex in a respondent voice, thinking to lead the Captain back to speaking of his wedding, perhaps even of his marriage.

The Captain sank his chin into his chest to give Alex an angle for working on the back of his neck. "You've got a free run of your life, haven't you."

Christ, thought Alex. Hasn't he? I'm enviable?

Silence.

"If you could have a go at getting rid of this wretched kink. One detests oneself with curly hair and this kink keeps rearing its ugly head. What would be the cause of it?"

"The shape of the follicles, sir."

"Really?"

Alex went on with his work and then said, using the pronoun insisted on at Stumpers, "Do we have the hair parted on the left as usual, sir?"

"Thanks. I say, thought follicles were round."

"A round follicle gives us straight hair, sir. If it's oval we have wavy-to-curly hair."

"So some of my follicles are oval. Not that one's got anything to make an opera about. But is that odd of one?"

"Round follicles are standard only in Japanese and some other Asian hair types, sir."

Captain Booter eventually stood up, looked at his head in a back mirror, nodded a thank-you to Alex, said "On the account" to the cashier (who seldom saw cash), and added softly to her, "Put on the usual for Alex. Same appointment Monday after next, please."

"Alex will have left us by then, sir."

"He can't be leaving. One's supposed to be getting married, if all goes well. He's indispensable." The Captain unnecessarily blew his nose with a linen handkerchief. "Sustenance."

"We can give you Gregory, sir," said the cashier, "though we realize the faithful connection with Alex. Gregory has been training alongside him."

"Others do have to move on." A heavy sigh, like the sigh of a small child trying to explain himself and thwarted by lack of language. Alex, in earshot while he waited for his next client, heard the sigh and remembered his own pent-up infancy.

Captain Booter turned to him and said, "Where are you branching out to? When you've hit Stumpers there can't be anywhere to go. You've captured the peak, I mean."

The cashier said, for Alex, "He's going to another salon, sir."

"For women," said Alex.

"Then one must tell Virginia."

So that was her name, at last.

"You must give one the address," said Captain Booter. "The hoped-for bridesmaids would come in droves. Let alone Virginia herself."

"It's in East Croydon, sir."

"Where is East Croydon exactly?"

"It's fifteen minutes from Victoria Station, sir."

"That close. In one's ignorance one somehow only thinks of East Croydon as the place where one changes. Changes trains for somewhere else."

Alex quenched the mild reply that people lived there.

"Maybe you live there," said Captain Booter. "Sometimes one catches oneself being horribly rude. Do you?"

"Yes."

"You'll give me the telephone number? I know Virginia will want it." The cashier noticed that Captain Booter could say "I," given occasion, and wrote the number on a card for him. The Captain said, "We really mustn't lose touch. People always say that but one does mean it, Alex."

THAT evening, taking Virginia out to dinner, Piggy Booter said, "You know Alex?"

"The Alex you call your gentle barber?"

"Well, he's branching out into women's hair and I've got his number. It's in East Croydon. Thought perhaps one should support the decision. The trains go every ten min-

BUYING AND SELLING

All the way across the Bay Bridge I sang
to the cool winds buffeting my Ford,
for I was on my way to a life of buying
untouched drive shafts, universal joints,
perfect bearings so steeped in Cosmoline
they could endure a century and still retain
their purity of functional design, they
could outlast everything until, like us,
their usefulness became legend and they
were transformed into sculpture. At Benicia
or the Oakland Naval Yard or Alameda
I left the brilliant Western sun behind
to enter the wilderness of warehouses
with one sullen enlisted man as guide.
There under the blinking artificial light
I was allowed to unwrap a single sample,
to hack or saw my way with delicacy
through layer after layer of cardboard,
metallic paper, cloth webbing, wax
as hard as wood until the dulled steel
was revealed beneath. I read, if I could,
the maker's name, letters, numbers—
all of which translated into functions
and values known only to the old moguls
of the great international junk companies
of Chicago, Philadelphia, Brooklyn,
whose young emissary I was. I, who at
twenty had wept publicly in the Dexter-
Davidson branch of the public library
over the death of Keats in the Colvin
biography and had prayed like him
to be among the immortals, now lived
at thirty by a code of figures so arcane
they passed from one side of the brain
to the other only in darkness. I, who
at twenty-six had abandoned several careers
in salesmanship—copper kitchenware,
Fuller brushes, American encyclopedias—
from door to unanswered door in the down-
and-out-neighborhoods of Detroit, turning
in my sample cases like a general handing
over his side arms and swagger stick, I
now relayed the new gospels across mountains
and the Great Plains states to my waiting masters.
The news came back: Bid! And we did
and did so in secret. The bids were
awarded, so trucks were dispatched,
Mohawks, Tam O'Shanters, Iroquois.
In new Wellingtons, I stood to one side
while the forklifts did their work,
entering only at the final moment to pay
both loaders and drivers their pittances
not to steal, to buy at last what could
not be bought. The day was closing down.
Even in California the afternoon skies
must turn from blue to a darker blue
and finally take the color of coal, and stars
—the same or similar ones—hidden so long
above the Chicago River or the I.R.T.
to Brooklyn, emerge stubbornly not in ones
but in pairs, for there is safety in numbers.
Silent, alone, I would stand in the truck's
gray wake feeling something had passed,
was over, complete. The great metal doors
of the loading dock crashed down, and in
the sudden aftermath I inhaled a sadness
stronger than my Lucky Strike, stronger
than the sadness of these hills and valleys
with their secret ponds and streams unknown
even to children, or the sadness of children
themselves, who having been abandoned believe
their parents will return before dark.

—Philip Levine

• •

utes. The old hag checked. I say, what has one done?"

"She's your secretary, darling. Jane. She worships you and she's beginning to feel you despise her."

"But she must know she's irreplaceable. Has she been blubbing?"

"No, but you need to put it right. I rang you at the barracks and I could hear from her voice that there was something wrong. So I asked her and she told me. It wasn't a complaint, dove." Virginia was from Northumberland, a county of unknotted people. Loving the Captain, she was not going to call him Piggy. "I was surprised she was still there. Isn't she due to be on maternity leave?"

"She begged to stay on until the last minute. The baby's wildly overdue. She said she'd go nuts sitting about at home."

"She sees things through."

"If the infant doesn't appear by the end of the week they're going to put the ferrets up."

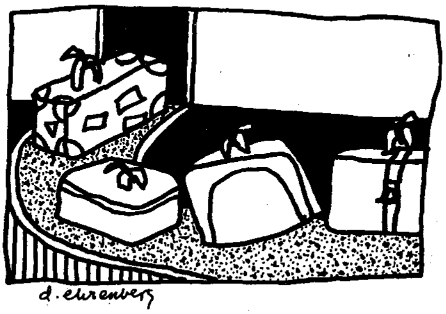
"What on earth do you mean?"

"Induce it, surgeons call it, don't they? Your piece of turf."

"Darling," said Virginia, her small face a cry of pain, "you've got to stop talking like this. You're a gentle soldier."

"Did one do something wrong?"

"I'm sure you didn't do anything wrong. It's the way you speak. You're not like that."



Captain Booter held his head and then paid the bill. His check signature looked fraudulent because his hand was shaking. He tore up the check and paid cash.

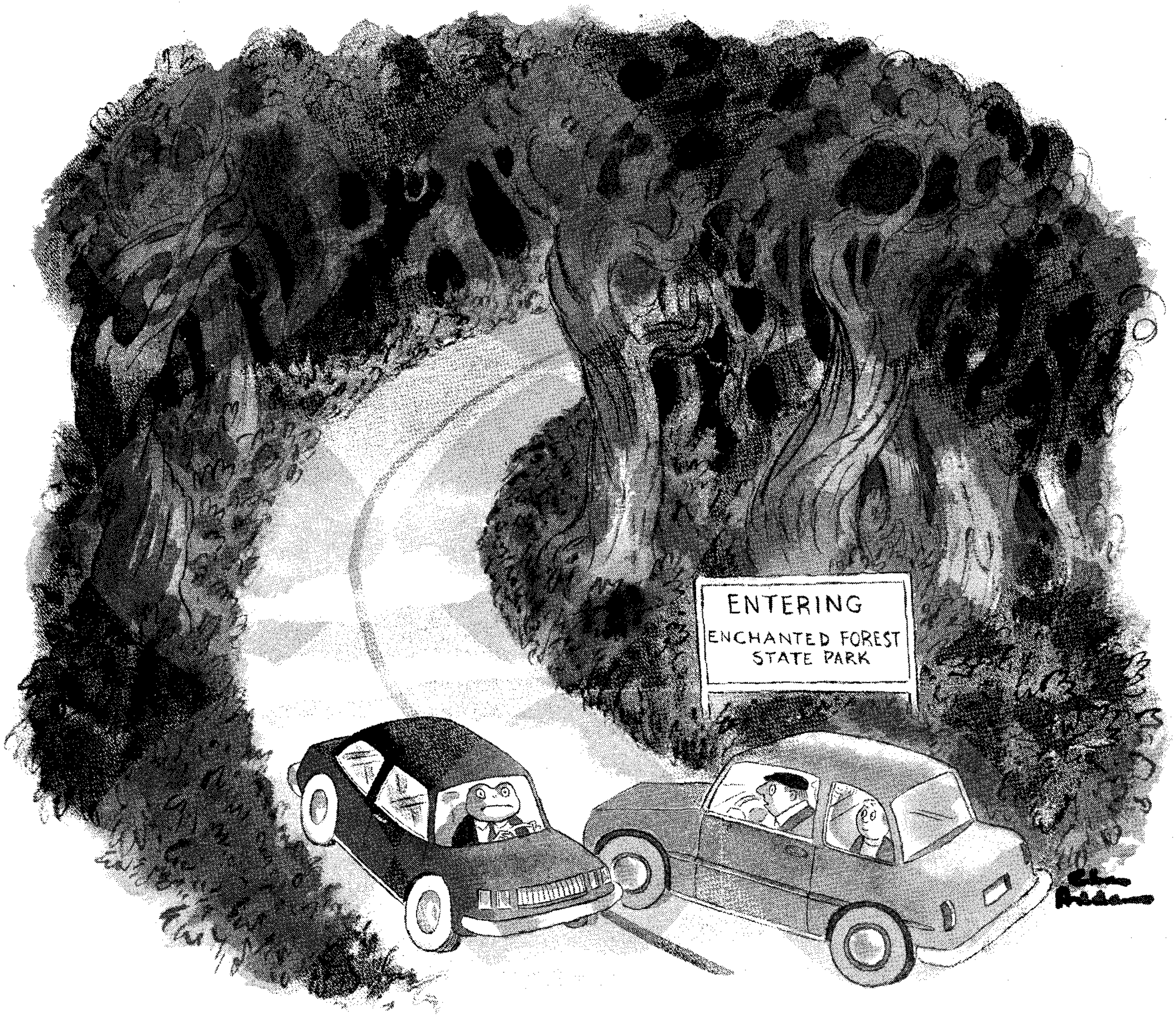
Virginia couldn't sleep that night. After thought, she rang the Captain. One ring only, in case he was asleep. He picked up at once.

"Couldn't you sleep either, dove?" she said.

"It's because one's used to sleeping together."

She unravelled that sentence almost without noticing by now and said at the same time, "Is it?"

"My fault. After one's cohabited so long I thought one should have a breather before one got spliced." Suppose she was leaving him.



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"May I come round?" she said.

"Is something hurting?"

"Something's on my mind."

He felt not fear then, only a deep sadness. "I'll drive over."

"No," she said, "I'm already dressed. I'll be there in three minutes." She hung up before he had time to say that he was dressed too.

VIRGINIA sat down on his sofa, the pull-out one they had used as a bed for two years. Obviously he had made no feint at a night of sleep.

"Can I get us something?"

"Maybe some broth?"

They went together to the kitchen, waited in silence for the water to boil, used two bouillon cubes. Virginia curled her hands around the mug as she sat on the sofa again.

"You haven't taken your shoes off yet. You usually do, to put your feet up."

"We're doing something wrong."

"Is one being jilted?" He walked about. "Please talk."

"But then I'd be talking for you. I do it too much in my head as it is." She shook her hair to get her words straight. "That's exactly the trouble."

"What is?"

"Oh, darling. You must hear it. 'Is one being jilted.' I know you're minding a very great deal but you're sounding ironclad." She drove on, loathing it. "I know things don't come out the way you mean them. But sometimes even I forget and start to wonder."

"Wonder what?"

"Whether you're a boor."

He waited.

"You do know I didn't say bore."

"Yes."

"And you do know you're beloved. Or else we wouldn't be here."

" 'But,' you're saying. Go on."

"This 'one' instead of 'I.' You're disowning what you say."

"You mean not carrying the can."

For once she said, "No. I mean *those* words."

"It's because one doesn't like to make a big deal about oneself."

She held back and he noticed that. He noticed everything about her.

"It must be something that one picked up. Hell, that I picked up."

"I can't tell any longer. I've got so used to translating everything you say that it's humiliating between us. To you."

"Probably to you, too." It was when he suddenly came out with such things that she knew they must be on a firm road after all. She watched carefully and saw him now as a steadied shape. Before, even standing so stiffly that he was at military attention, he had sometimes swayed like a Druidical rocking-stone.

“What do you want to do?” he said.

“I think we should wait. And I think we shouldn’t get married with red carpets and morning coats.”

“We can’t send back one’s presents.”

“They’re from friends. Friends understand.”

“What about the Waterford jug from the great-aunt, say. The G.A. isn’t a friend at all.”

“Then we shouldn’t have asked her.”

“One couldn’t not. I couldn’t not. Hell’s bells.”

“Darling, go lightly.” He got so angered by himself. “Couldn’t we just go on living together and sort things out on the way?”

“Does the G.A. get on your nerves? Things like the G.A.? If there is anything else like the G.A.”

She laughed then and things were again immediately in place, but he still made himself say “Go on.”

She spread her hands to batten down a word and said, “Clutter.”

“Go on.”

“When we met, we had room. A huge amount of room to live in together. There was nothing there but the two of us. And now we’re tripping over ourselves to avoid the knickknacks.”

He gave a practically imperceptible nod and, after raising his eyebrows for accord, turned out the lights. They spent the night on the sofa, properly pulled out, the two of them sleeping not fitfully. Next morning, after coffee, Virginia rang East Croydon and asked if she could have an appointment with Alex when he had started.

“THE hair looks good,” said the Captain. “What did you make of him?”

“There’s a lot to him, isn’t there,” she said. They were in her bed-sitter, which had a small kitchen.

“Always thought so. How did you get on?”

“He thinks a lot of you, too.” She smiled and added, “He said you talked more.”

“Did he think you were still-waters-running-deep department?”

“Darling!”

“What’s he up to?”

“I don’t know him much yet. While he was combing me out he told me a bit about his wedding-photographer job. And a lot about his brother. Not the one who’s just moved his vet surgery but the younger one at the Indian laundry who’s practicing to be an accompanist. Alex asked us both to his wedding.”

“*Alex’s*? It can’t be the same man.”

“Of course it is. He knew loads about us.”

“But one’s been going to him for ages and he never said any of this.”

“Perhaps he’s more at home in East Croydon.”

“Alex a wedding photographer and getting married? He can’t take photographs as well as getting married and doing women’s hair.”

“Truly. He can and is and does. He showed me a portfolio. Also a pic he took of his girlfriend. She’s Pakistani.”

Captain Booter thought, then said “Ooh-ah” at his own expense with an assumed look of vacuity.

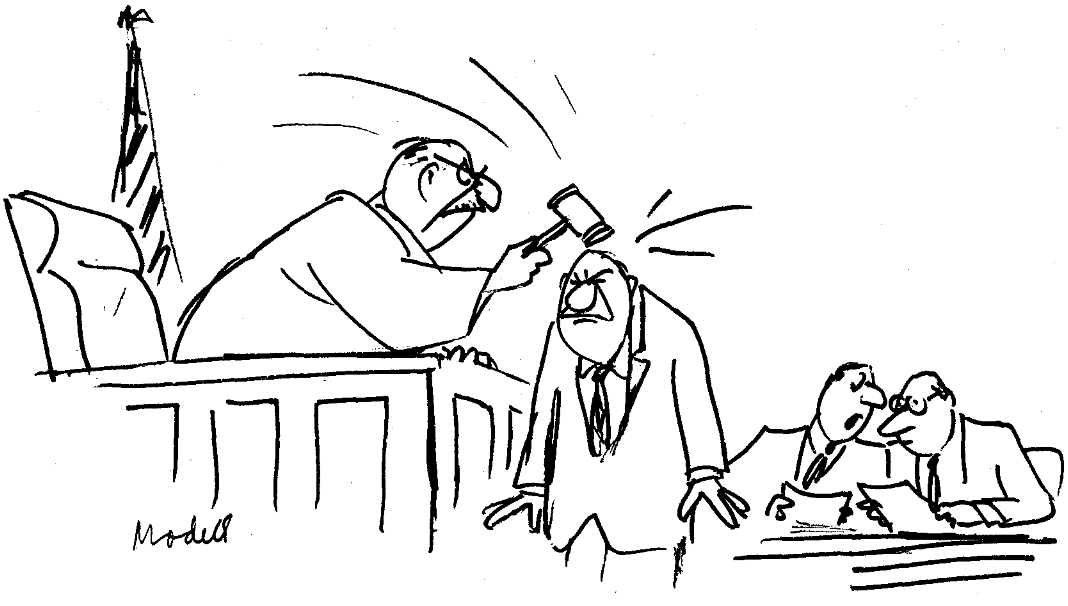
“He does the wedding photographs in his spare time because of the mortgage. Also he obviously enjoys doing them. He’s good. He’s booked every Saturday and Sunday and he says it’s much less tiring now that he doesn’t have to travel up to Stumpers. He spends the whole day on each wedding. Mornings getting to know the families for the candid shots, which he says he likes the best, then the groups, which he’s not keen on, then the church or synagogue or registry office, then the cake-cutting and the going-away if the wedding’s formal. Then he picks up his younger brother from the laundry and takes him to night school. The brother hasn’t got a driving license yet, but Alex has a moped that seats two. He’s working on the engine of a secondhand car to get it ready for his own wedding.”

“You did get a lot out of him. Not the man he was at Stumpers.” There was a long pause. “Did he ask about one?” He checked back. “In this case, us? About the wedding and all that, in fact?”

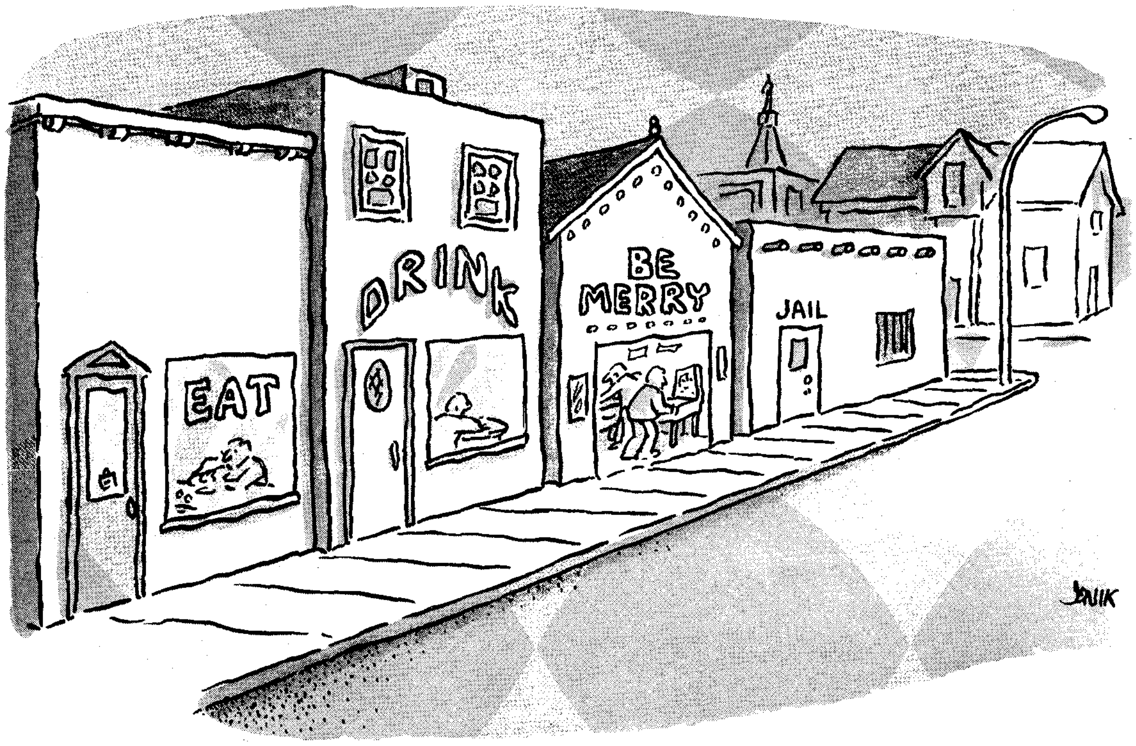
“Best wishes, twice.” That “one” was hesitancy, she thought, getting the signal at once because she had been talking too fast herself. She fell into a more usual silence and got dinner for the two of them. The room filled with the smell of pasta basilica and garlic. The first time she had ever cooked for him she had given him pasta basilica and he had hated it. And of course, he thought, I’ve gone and left it too late to tell her.

“Has one left everything too late?” he said, speaking out loud without meaning to. She heard the intent and thought it best not to trample by pursuing. There were always other ways.

IN this fashion, they lived in unuttered happy suspension for two months. The church was cancelled, the wedding



“Judge Wycoff is a strong advocate of swift justice.”



presents kept and thanked for. The "one"s came and went, voice of irresolution. Then, just before Alex's wedding, Virginia said after work, "I'm going down to Alex's tomorrow. Why don't you come?"

"Is one's hair looking long? Gregory's not the same as Alex." Pause. "Well, he wouldn't be, would he?"

Virginia said, "You do miss him, darling, don't you?"

"I was going to ask if one wouldn't get into your hair." Pause. "Lordy me, I've done it again. But anyway, isn't Alex only doing women's hair now?"

"He's gone back to doing men's, too, to put some extra money by for the mortgage."

Alex isn't dithering about between two places and held up by roadblocks of presents, he thought. "Alex is way ahead of us," he said. She looked at his alert face with love of his elation.

In East Croydon, Alex shampooed Virginia's hair first and then the Captain's. While the Captain watched the professional Alex blow-drying her hair, he was struck afresh by the way she listened.

A man beside him, small and quail-shaped, with a fussed expression, wearing a tennis-club blazer with a carefully drooped handkerchief in the chest pocket, leaned over and said heftily, "I suppose I should introduce myself."

The Captain nodded cordially and looked back at Virginia and Alex.

"I'm Campbell. Not the soup. I'm in instrument hiring. Uprights and Wurlitzers for the most part. And I'm thinking of getting into a synthesizer or two."

Captain Booter had a vision of this portly man squeezing into a Moog or two.

"Name of the firm is Fine-Eared Music-Makers. This is my lady wife, Mrs. Campbell."

Captain Booter shook hands with Mrs. Campbell. "She trotted along in my wake to oversee my mustache." The Captain jumped slightly and then went back to watching Alex at work. Alex's Pakistani fiancée came into the shop and, after putting a towel over her sari, started shampooing her long hair.

"Immense row of heads in the mirror. Like a display of beheadings on spikes at the Tower of London, except that we're not beheaded, of course," said Mr. Campbell, putting his index fingers to his mustache to shape it in his mind as he intended it to be clipped. "Who's the beauteous Oriental, one asks oneself."

Captain Booter suddenly caught a reflection of his own voice coming back at him as if they were all in a fun-fair hall of distorting mirrors. Virginia had been watching and made a gesture brushing away his thought.

"Alex's fiancée," said the Captain.

"Indian or Siamese or what?"

"Pakistani."

"Going to have a Buddhist wedding, then, are they? Only connection I've had with Buddhism was with a caterer from Wales unemployment. Sudden convert. I engaged her all unknowing to cope with the ponies and my letters. Offered her a shorthand course, even. Would she take it? Said she had too much to do. Praying every twenty minutes some days, one found, so no wonder."

The Captain looked at Alex's fiancée for fear she would have heard, but her ears were under water.

"Too busy meditating to clean the boiler. We had to get rid of her. Tell him what I said about my victory, dear."

"You say," said Mrs. Campbell.

He fingered the gold embroidery on his tennis-blazer badge. "Last serve, double fault by the unemployable, match to Fine-Eared Music-Makers."

"How vile," said Captain Booter.

Fine-Eared Music-Makers heard "dire" and said, "Yes, dire straits indeed. Good riddance, one said."

"Both of you?" said Captain Booter dryly, getting up and taking Virginia away after leaving their wedding present of a red leather photograph album for Alex and his fiancée to find at the till desk.

BACK at his place in London, Captain Booter looked out of the window for a few minutes and then said, "One was lucky you didn't get rid of me."

"A 'one' and a 'me,'" she said. "We're more than halfway there."

"Am I like that man?"

"Not remotely. You told him exactly what you thought." She looked at him with simplicity. "I'm daft. We're totally there." —PENELOPE GILLIATT

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COUNCIL CONSIDERS,
AND REJECTS PREGNANCY
—*Avon (Conn.) News.*

A wise move.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

ASYMMETRY

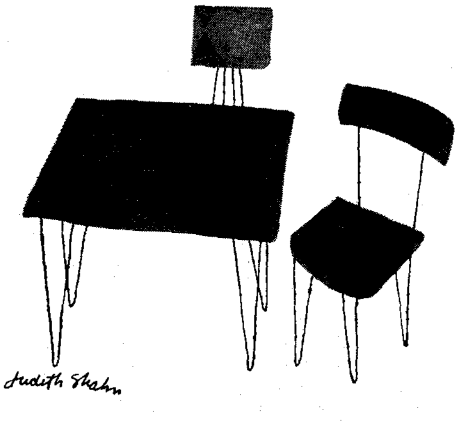
WHEN I first entered the thirteen-story-high atrium of the Mezhdunarodnaya (or "International") Hotel in Moscow, one day not long ago, I thought, Am I back in the Hyatt-Regency in Cambridge, Massachusetts? This sense of dislocation was the more vivid because the last time I had been in Moscow was forty-two years ago, toward the end of the Second World War, when, as a foreign correspondent with strict limitations on my beat, I was more or less incarcerated in Room 475 of the crusty old Metropole Hotel. That bleak room had an aura: Bolsheviks had slept there. But, alas, by the time I slept there the pull chains on the overhead toilet tanks seldom worked right, and, for some reason, the bedbugs came out of the walls and entered my lumpy bunk for their nocturnal feast every night at exactly 1 A.M. But here I was now in this vast, familiar, hyper-modern pyramidal space, where light poured down through a huge, terraced slant on one side, and the exposed glass cages of Otis elevators beetled up and down the inner face of the room bank on the other. The Mezhdunarodnaya is the residential wing of a huge convention complex called the Sovincentr, on the left bank of the Moscow River, a mile or so downstream from the Kremlin. It was built between 1975 and 1980, at a cost of about a hundred and fifty million dollars, on the suggestion of Armand Hammer. He had arranged for two-thirds of the financing for it from the United States Export-Import Bank and the Chase Manhattan Bank, and he had suggested three big trade centers in the United States as models for its design. Hence, I suppose, my reflex of feeling right at home.

Then I saw, rising fifty feet high in the center of the lobby, a vivid declaration of place, in the form of an ornate clock tower, made, it appeared, of bronze. Its unmistakable message was "You are not in a new world. You have come to ancient and watchful Russia." I learned later that this tower had not been in the original plan for the hotel. In early 1980, when two American supervising engineers were helping to rush the building to completion in time for that year's Olympic Games, some high officials came to inspect the work. They were outraged, and exclaimed that this center was in Moscow, not Milwaukee. They ordered the planting in the atrium of a strong Russian statement. They got one.

The clock itself, built under orders of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Clock Industry, has three faces and is housed in a big globular swelling about two-thirds of the way up the tower. On each hour, as the time is struck, three portals in the column below the clock open, and on three small carrousels clockwork figures from Russian folktales can be seen going round and round: the mighty warrior Dobrynya Nikitich saving Russia from a ravaging dragon; Kolobok, an animated pancake, outwitting evil animals—bear, wolf, fox—that want to eat him; Zhar-Ptitsa, the firebird of happiness (and of Stravinsky), being captured by the only one of three sons who has a kind heart; Emelya-Durachok, a lazy but good-hearted peasant, catching a magic pike that will do for him whatever he wishes; and others. Above the clock is a slender spire, and perched atop that is the crux of the message—a huge rooster, the creature from Pushkin's "Tale of the Golden Cockerel." In Pushkin's poem the Czar Dadon, harassed by invaders, gets the help of a magician, who gives him security from his enemies. In Babette Deutsch's translation:

> Should there come from any quarter
> Raiders ripe for loot and slaughter,
> Then my golden cockerel
> Will arouse: his comb will swell,
> He will crow, and up and doing,
> Turn to where the danger's brewing.

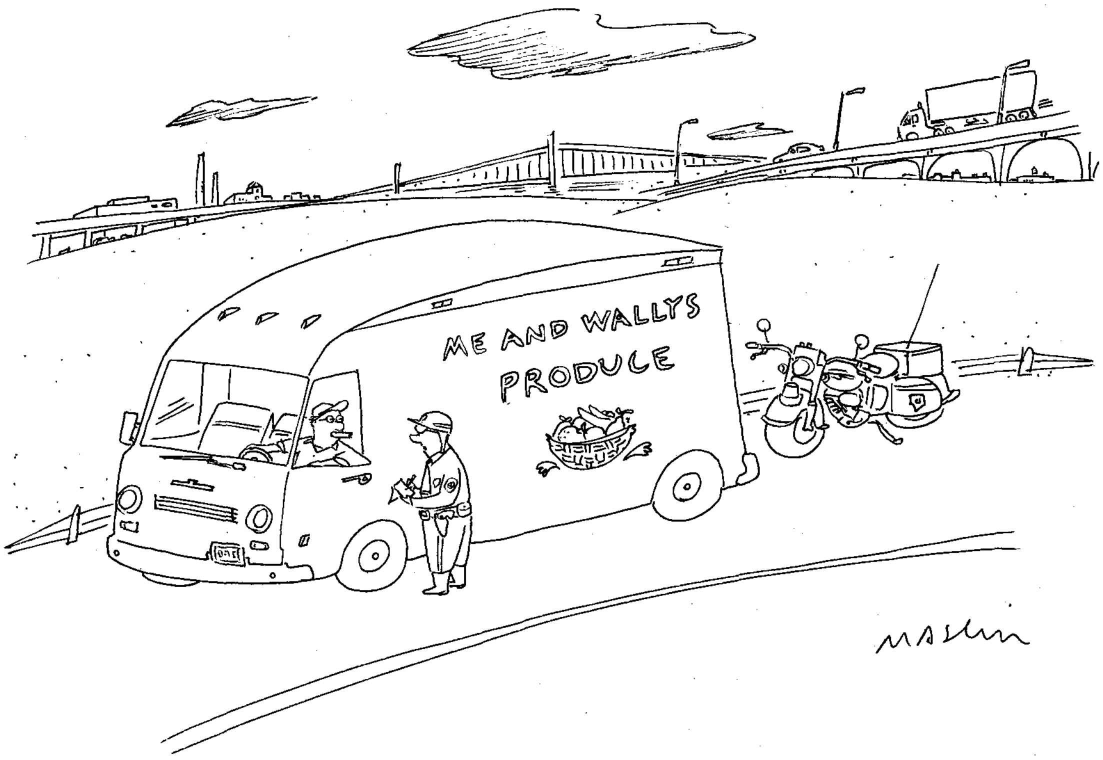
Every hour of every day and night, the cock on the spire in this hotel lobby crows, and a mechanical larynx in the tower then sings out orchestral strains from Rimsky-Korsakov's "Le Coq d'Or."



This clock tower, in a hotel that last year received thirty-seven thousand business representatives from foreign countries, most of them capitalist, makes a national statement, not a political one. It celebrates the historic Russian obsession. A Soviet acquaintance put the matter into words for me a few days after my arrival. England, he said, has its Channel, Italy its mountains, the United States two oceans, but flat Russia has almost no natural defenses. His motherland has suffered incursions by, among many others, Genghis Khan and the Tatars, from the east; Greeks and Turks, from the south; Swedes and Finns, from the north; and Napoleon and Hitler, from the west. She needs the metaphor of this alert bird, he said, which will point to every danger and crow.

I WAS checking in at the Mezhdunarodnaya in order to attend, as a spectator, the seventh world congress of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War—the outfit that won the Nobel Peace Prize two years ago—which was to be held in the Sovincentr in the next few days. I also hoped to get, during my short stay, some sense of how Moscow had changed since my earlier visit, and to glean what clues I could to the nature and prospects of Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost*, his "opening" of Soviet society.

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War owes its existence, in a way, to a longstanding friendship between the two men who accepted the Peace Prize—Dr. Bernard Lown, of Boston, and Dr. Yevgeni Chazov, of Moscow, who is the Soviet Union's Minister of Health. In 1961, a group of young doctors in the Boston area—including Jack Geiger, Victor Sidel, Sidney Alexander, and Lown—formed an American organization called Physicians for Social Responsibility, to educate their fellow-doctors and the public about the medical consequences of a nuclear war. In the late seventies, after the Three Mile Island accident, a psychiatrist



"Sorry, but I'm going to have to issue you a summons for reckless grammar and driving without an apostrophe."

named Eric Chivian organized, in Boston, the first conference of physicians to consider what would happen to medical services in a nuclear attack—namely, that they would be wiped out. At about the same time, Chivian and Lown and two other P.S.R. physicians, James Muller and Herbert Abrams, began discussing the possibility of a Soviet-American medical dialogue on nuclear war, and Lown said he knew someone in Russia he could propose it to.

At a world conference of cardiologists in New Delhi in 1966, Lown had struck up a conversation in a hotel elevator with Yevgeni Chazov. The two men were already well-known cardiologists. Lown had invented the defibrillator, a device that uses electrical charges to bring a tumultuous heartbeat under control; Chazov, with others, had developed streptokinase, a drug widely used to dissolve blood clots. Lown talked with Chazov about his own research on cardiac sudden death. Two years later, Chazov invited Lown to Moscow to give a speech on that subject to nine hundred Russian doctors. The speech was a flop: the Russians said that this form of heart failure was a capitalist phenomenon, a result of stress caused by competition of sorts that did not exist in the Soviet Union.

Lown and Chazov had become friends, and they began to write to each other, often sharing their worries about the nuclear-arms race. In 1972, after the Nixon-Brezhnev opening, Lown was again invited to Moscow, this time for a consultation on an ill patient in the Kremlin—Chazov had become Chief of the Fourth Administration of the Ministry of Health, which was charged with medical care of the top Soviet leaders (he later, by the way, became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party). In a meeting at the Ministry of Health after the consultation, Soviet doctors admitted to Lown that cardiac sudden death had been a leading cause of mortality in Russia in the previous four years. Lown and Chazov then worked together on a joint Soviet-American task force on cardiac sudden death.

The success of this collaboration encouraged Lown to write to Chazov, in late 1979, urging the formation of a Soviet-American physicians' organization "for the prevention of nuclear war." He argued that doctors had a professional duty to concern themselves with the greatest threat to human health, and that an East-West doctors' group would be especially effective in educating the public and perhaps in persuading governments. The following December, Lown, Muller, and Chivian met in Geneva with Chazov, Leonid Ilyin, chairman of the U.S.S.R. Commission on Radiation Protection, and Mikhail Kuzin, director of the Institute of Surgery of the Soviet Academy of Medical Sciences. "We had some intense and contentious sessions," Lown later reported to his colleagues in Physicians for Social Responsibility. "Several times, it seemed we would break up and each group go its own way. We Americans addressed the paramount issue of human rights; we raised Afghanistan and other sticky matters. But the Russians had an even longer litany of our abuses: they spoke of economic and political injustices in our society; they pointed to America's support of nearly every reactionary and oppressive regime around the globe, to the funding of terrorist groups—ad infinitum." The only possible agreement—one that the teams finally reached—was on the notion of founding a single-issue organization, which would strictly limit itself to the medical threat of nuclear arms. They agreed that the organization should be a worldwide one, and that it should be neutral and nonpartisan.

And so, after further negotiations, and after the enlistment of some physicians from Hiroshima, to put memory's bite on the group, the first congress of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War was held, near Washington, in March, 1981, and Lown and Chazov eventually became co-presidents. Thus, the organization locked itself into a glaring asymmetry. The American doctors in it were protestants against the policies of their government; the Soviet doctors were, in effect, part of their government. I.P.P.N.W. had, so to speak, a Harvard-Kremlin axis.

For that first congress, the group had managed, after many difficulties, to convene seventy doctors, from twelve countries. Now, six years later, an astonishing horde of twenty-five hundred doctors, from sixty countries, representing a worldwide membership of a hundred and seventy thousand, were gathering in the Sovincentr. This remarkable growth had not come about without some rather violent pains, stemming in part from the symbiotic paranoias of the superpowers; from I.P.P.N.W.'s asymmetry; from the bold way the American doctors dabbled in something they called "citizen diplomacy;" and from the keen interest in the whole mishmash of East-West nuclear irrationalities on the part of the peoples of the Second and Third Worlds. Despite these complications, the group had achieved two stunning successes: American and Soviet physicians had somehow been able to arrive at a genuine symmetry of trust—the one element without which Russians and Americans will never be safe from nuclear bombs—and, thanks partly to the fact that the Soviet Union's medical leaders did trust their American colleagues, Mikhail Gorbachev had also apparently come to trust them, and he would give them opportunities to press their views on him in person.

THE day after my arrival, as jet lag ebbed, my wife and I and my interpreter, Taya Portnova—a Soviet citizen who is married to an American lawyer, lives in the United States, and works for I.P.P.N.W.—toured the city by car, in drizzly weather. As we drove away from the Mezhdunarodnaya along the riverbank, we passed a handful of skyscrapers, none of which had been there in my earlier time. Central Moscow, around the Kremlin, is so far one of the relatively horizontal of the great capitals of the world, and, just as in Peking, where it was once the rule that no buildings should be taller than those of the Forbidden City, so here the skyscrapers seemed to have been kept out on the fringes, at a discreet distance from the Kremlin's lovely onion-bulb towers.

The most obvious difference between this Moscow we were seeing and that of my previous visit, however, was in the traffic. During my earlier stay, Moscow lay under a bell jar of silence; the streets were deserted and hushed, save for the occasional passage of an enormous black ZIM limousine, purring its message of privilege in a socialist state. Now cars and trucks—all, as far as I could see, made in the Soviet Union—choked the broad Leningradsky Prospekt as we drove up to the rings of boulevards at the heart of the old city.

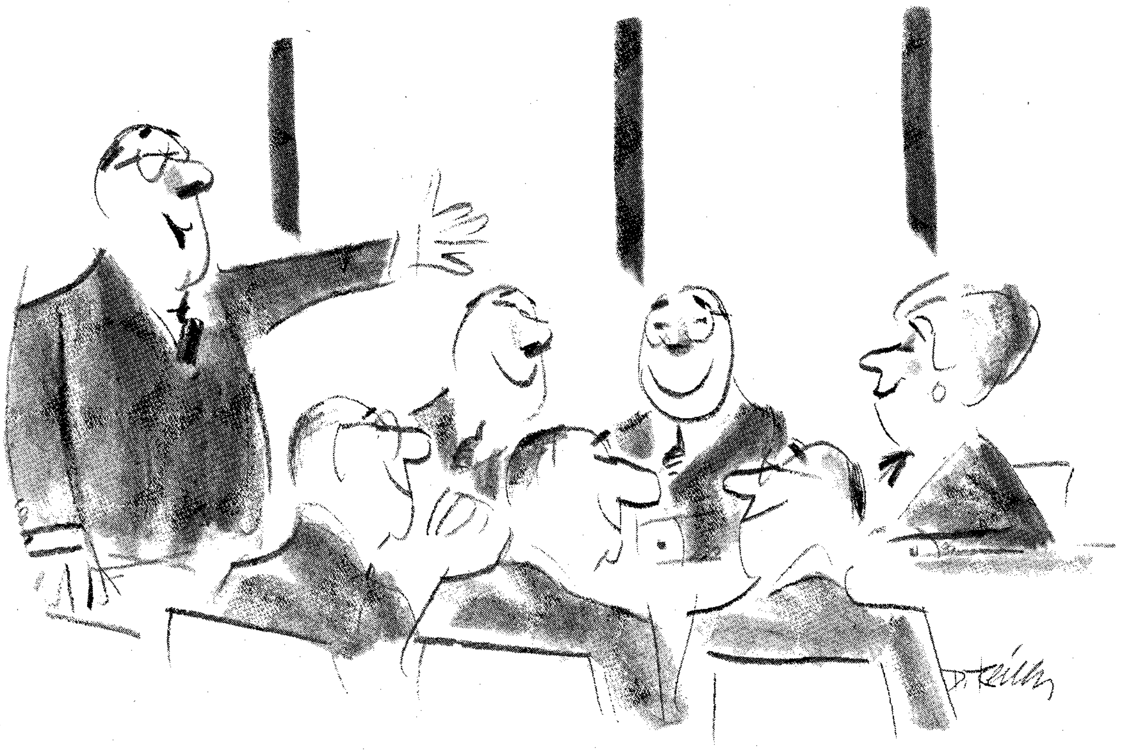
Central Moscow, with its historic buildings in soft ochres and pale yellows and pinks and bluish grays, seemed to have changed very little. I was disappointed to find the Metropole encased in the scaffolds and stagings of a complete renovation, which meant there would be no admittance to my nostalgia. But I could vent it on the sight of the shapely Bolshoi Theatre across the way, where I had gone night after night to escape the bleakness of wartime Moscow, watching dancers who were making ballet history—Ulanova, Osipenko, Lepeshinskaya—and seeing and hearing the theatre's dazzlingly opulent productions of "The Queen of Spades," "Boris Godunov," "Eugene Onegin." Drawn past the Metropole and the Bolshoi by the irresistible centripetal force of old Moscow, we parked the car and walked through rain into Red Square.

Just as had happened four decades earlier, when I set foot on that paved field of ancient battles I found myself clothed in goosepimples. On two sides were immense arcaded palaces of commerce and bureaucracy, housing, among other things, the huge GUM department store. Above the cube of Lenin's tomb rose the Kremlin, piled up behind its towering pale-pink walls as if unlimited power could feel really at home only in an ornate prisonlike fortress. For me, the awesomeness of Red Square was still lodged in largest part in St. Basil's Cathedral, with its complex family of swirling towers and spangled bulbs, and its look of having been daydreamed rather than constructed—surely one of the strangest and most beautiful buildings in the world. Legend has it that Ivan the Terrible killed the architect after the church was designed, to make sure no structure like it would ever be attempted.

Troth

As we drove out to the Lenin Hills, on the edge of town, past the site of the Olympics, I got a sense of the sprawl that four decades had brought to Moscow. In that earlier time, some of us correspondents and friends of ours in the United States military mission used to borrow an Embassy jeep on Sundays and drive what seemed a quite short distance, to a serene countryside of wooden dachas and forests of linden and birch—Chekhov country—where, on open land, we would gather wood, build a fire, and cook a picnic. (Later in this visit, I went out to the suburbs, and saw miles and miles and miles of five- and six-story concrete apartment houses, all rather bleak and run-down-looking. Every few blocks, there would be a store within one of the buildings, with a sign advertising *produkty*—groceries—but other sorts of shops were rare.)

On the Lenin Hills, we had a panoramic view of the city, with the hideous bulk of Moscow University, constructed after my earlier time in Moscow, looming behind us on the crest of the heights. Dictators have a sinister habit of defacing their capitals: Mussolini with the atrociously pompous boulevard leading to the Vatican; Mao tearing down Peking's ravishingly gated walls; and, here, Stalin with seven huge buildings in an identical style of megalomaniacal grandeur. He seemed to have aimed for a mode of great fountains of stone, suitable as supreme monuments to socialism—as Chartres is to Christendom—and arrived instead at grotesque overstatements that reminded me of the melted-wax and cake-icing nightmare of Gaudí's Barcelona cathedral. These buildings—the university was one, and from our hotel room we stared at another, the Hotel Ukraine, across the river—struck me as the most harmful change that forty years had brought to this city of so many haunting architectural treasures.



"I don't think of us so much as 'the Board' as of a Walt, a Phil, a Pete, a Flo, two Chucks, and a Moe."

At about ten o'clock that night, I was sharply reminded of my earlier stay, when, hearing a rumble from our hotel room, I looked out and saw fireworks rising in multicolored sprays from stages all along the curving river. Every evening back in the late winter and early spring of 1945, loudspeakers that looked like cheap cones of black cardboard and were strung through the streets of the city and in every corridor of every hotel suddenly crackled *"Prekaz!"*—"Announcement!"—and a voice that could have been taken for that of Stalin himself exultantly listed the names of cities, towns, and hamlets recaptured that day from the Germans, and then fireworks shimmered and boomed all over town. For the surviving citizens of Moscow, those must have been thrilling displays. I wondered now if Muscovites were stirred by these new fireworks—and, if so, why—and the next day I asked Taya what they were celebrating. She didn't know; she would ask. No Russians seemed to know. We kept asking. No clue. Several days later, in a conversation with Yevgeni Chazov, I asked about the fireworks, and he, at last, knew the answer. He said that they marked "an annual day in honor of the nation's Border Guards."

The Moscow of my earlier visit was a sombre city. It had been narrowly spared. The first day of my present visit, driving in from Sheremetyevo Airport, we had passed the monument—a complex of X's, in the shape of a huge tank barrier—marking, so very close to the heartbeat of the Soviet Union, the last line of defense against the Germans in the Second World War. In its echo of the 1945 fireworks, this 1987 display was a reminder that in that war the Soviet Union lost twenty million lives. The United States lost four hundred thousand—one-fiftieth of that number. This vast differential is one of the things that give the metaphor of the golden cockerel its force—and may have something to do with the apparent difference between Gorbachev's and Reagan's senses of urgency about nuclear disarmament. When I asked I.P.P.N.W.'s new co-president, Mikhail Kuzin, what had moved him to work with the doctors' organization for the abolition of nuclear weapons, he answered, quite simply, that he had lost a brother at Leningrad and his sister's husband had died at Stalingrad. Dr. Chazov, the former co-president, who is somewhat younger than Dr. Kuzin, told me that he had lost three uncles in the fighting in the Ukraine, and that his mother, a doctor in military hospitals at the front, was shell-shocked when one of them was bombed. Every family in Russia, Kuzin said, has its close reasons for wanting an end to the nuclear threat.

WHEN the Nobel Committee announced its award to I.P.P.N.W. in Oslo two years ago, it said that the organization had "performed a considerable service to mankind by spreading authoritative information and by creating an awareness of the catastrophic consequences of atomic warfare." Less than two hours after the announcement, the Soviet press published and praised the news: a response by no means symmetrical with its reaction to the same prize given ten years earlier to Andrei Sakharov, in enforced absentia—it had

THE COLLINGTONS
RATED PG
CHENEY

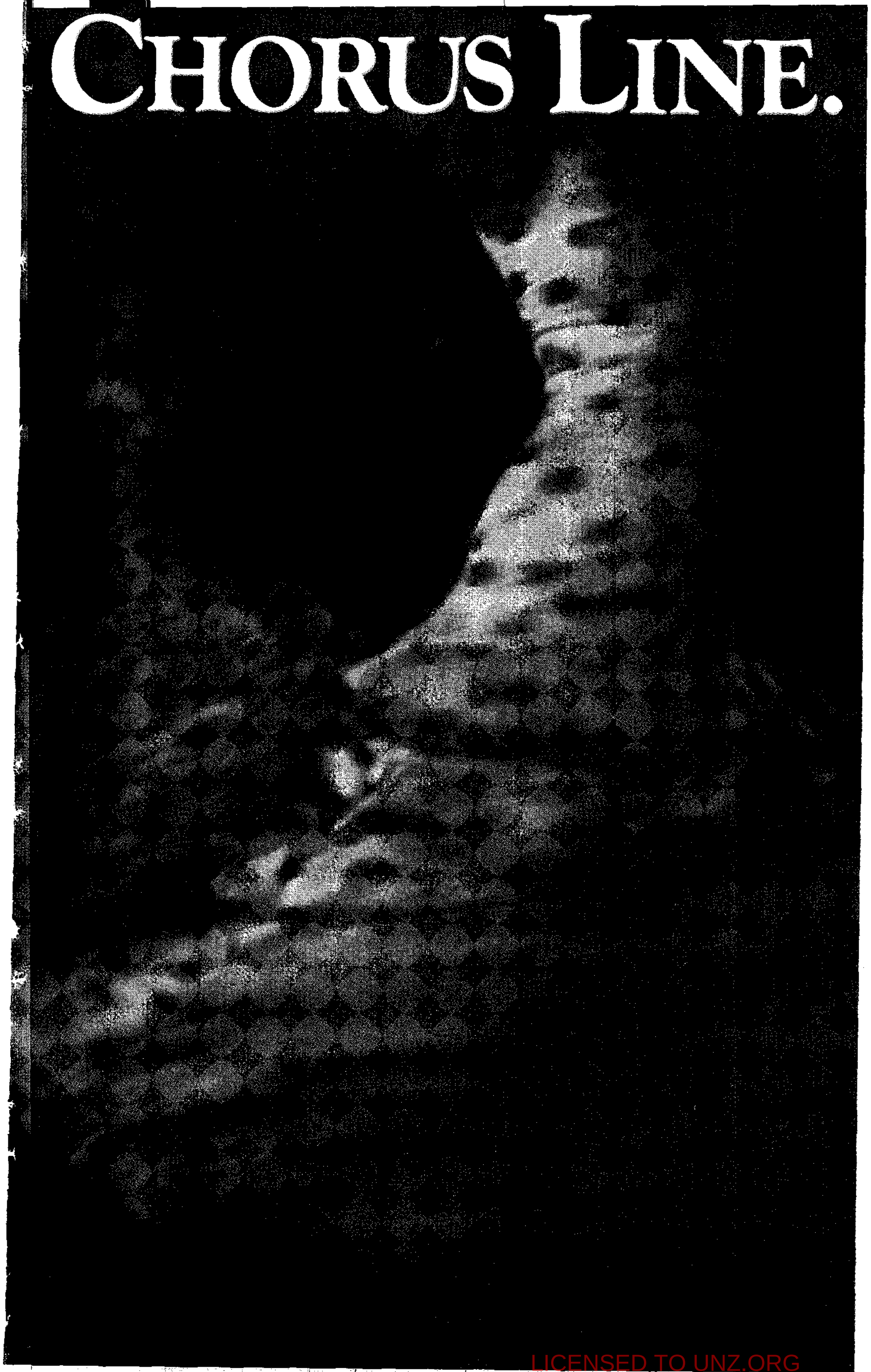
denounced that honor as "a prize for anti-Sovietism"—or, indeed, with the violent criticism in the United States, this time, of the award to I.P.P.N.W.

The *Wall Street Journal*, for one, wrote that with the 1985 award "the Nobel Peace Prize hit a new low." The *Journal* and many other papers pointed out that in 1973 Dr. Chazov had joined twenty-four other members of the Soviet Academy of Medical Sciences in signing a letter denouncing Andrei Sakharov for alleged anti-Soviet activities, and that another prominent Soviet I.P.P.N.W. member—Marat Vartanyan, deputy director of the U.S.S.R. Research Center of Mental Health—was said to be a leading apologist for the Soviet practice of throwing dissidents in mental hospitals.

While such human-rights issues as these were undoubtedly disturbing, the *Daily News* probably came closer to the real reason for the widespread outcry against the award in conservative newspapers across the country. I.P.P.N.W., the *News* wrote, "has an American branch, the usual mushy, harmless do-gooders, and a Soviet branch, headed by the personal physician to the Soviet leaders. It's a propaganda effort devoted to the view that the U.S.S.R. is always right and the U.S.A. always wrong in all matters of arms control. It's grotesque—but not the first time the Norwegian committee that awards the prize has gone off its collective Nordic head." Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's representative in nuclear-arms negotiations—who, like his boss, had been a tireless opponent, up to that time, of any agreement of any sort—called the American doctors "hopelessly naïve," and he went on, "They are undoubtedly fine physicians, but, on strategic topics, they are neither evenhanded nor well-informed. In my experience, they are opposed to all elements of the American nuclear deterrent and do not have a great deal to say about the Soviets." (Perle had had a firsthand experience with I.P.P.N.W. that may have colored his opinion of the group. In 1983, Dr. Lown, in a chat with Drs. Vartanyan and Kuzin in his home, near Boston, had suggested asking Perle to debate arms control with Vadim Zagladin, deputy head of the International Department of the Communist Party's Central Committee, at I.P.P.N.W.'s upcoming fourth congress, in Helsinki. The two Russian doctors had said, "Why not?" So Lown invited Perle, and Perle accepted. In Moscow, the next April, discussing plans for Helsinki with his co-president, Lown thought to ask whether Chazov knew who Perle was. Chazov did not. The next day, having found out, he vetoed the Perle speech, on the ground that it would be about how evil the Soviets were. Lown was obliged to disinvite Perle.)

Dismaying as these criticisms were, the American physicians in I.P.P.N.W. did not—and do not—consider themselves puppets of the Kremlin. And it was clear to me from the first moment of the 1987 congress that the charge that they were was absurd: Dr. Lown and I.P.P.N.W.'s remarkably friendly staff were firmly in control of all the proceedings; the entire program had been planned in Boston (with the Soviet doctors' approval of every detail); by far the most interesting speeches were by Americans; and—most striking of all in a conference held in Moscow—almost all the addresses were in English. It was quite clear that most of the American physicians had come to believe that Mikhail Gorbachev really wants what they want—to abolish nuclear arms—and that he wants this not in order to be able to invade Western Europe with conventional arms but in order to achieve a more rational and prosperous Soviet Union.

These convictions were expressed with a startling candor—of a sort not often heard from Americans talking publicly in the Soviet Union—by the very first speaker at the congress. He was an American professor, Stephen Cohen, who for two decades has pursued at Princeton University the discipline that seems to be known as Sovietology. Saying he would eschew the tradition that "when Americans are in the Soviet Union they must not speak critically of their own government or favorably of the Soviet government," Professor Cohen asserted that the real cause of the nuclear-arms race had been the almost complete militarization, on both sides, of American-Soviet relations. He added, "I regret to say that in recent years this militarized conception of national security has become particularly acute and dominant in the United States." The Reagan Administration, both


CHORUS LINE.

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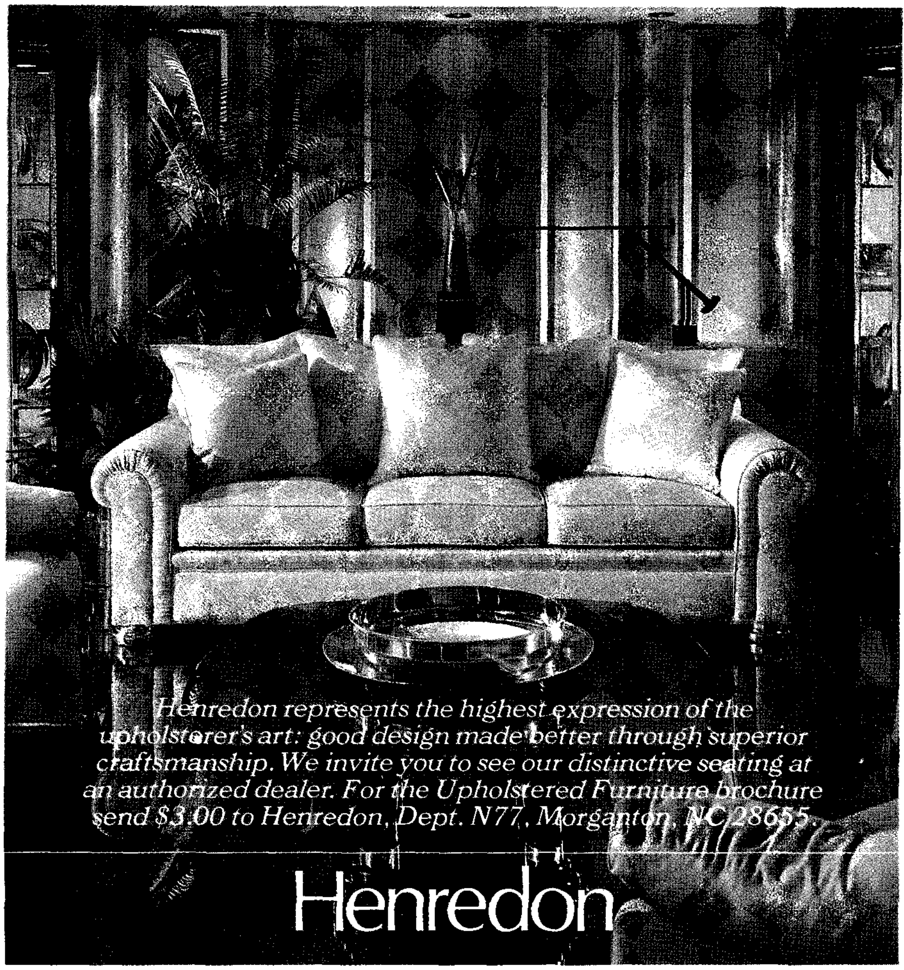
American political parties, and even the American peace movement, he said, talk endlessly about devising or limiting weapons, and rarely about the deep political conflicts between the two countries and the need to find solutions for them.

Cohen went on to observe that in the last two years Mikhail Gorbachev had repudiated a similar military over-emphasis on the Soviet side, which dated from the weapons buildup and missile deployments of Leonid Brezhnev, two decades ago. Gorbachev, Cohen said, had stated his basic principle in February, 1986: "The task of insuring security is increasingly . . . a political problem, and it can only be resolved by political means." Thus Gorbachev defined the foreign policy he needed in order to bring off the radical internal reforms he was proposing for the Soviet Union: what Cohen saw as a diplomacy vis-à-vis the United States of much greater political restraint than that shown in the militarized détente of the nineteen-seventies. "If I understand Gorbachev correctly," Cohen said, "this 'new political thinking' about Soviet-American relations represents a major breakthrough . . . and a historic opportunity for the United States to end the nuclear-arms race."

These words were closely followed by a graceful greeting to the delegates, in flawless Russian, from the new United States Ambassador to Moscow, Jack F. Matlock, Jr. He then read in English President Reagan's message to the doctors, the text of which proved to be a perfect illustration of what Cohen had been saying about American policy. The message was all about weapons. In it Reagan, it is true, urged less reliance "on threats of massive retaliation" and more "on defensive systems that threaten no one"—Star Wars, in other words. The President's only mention of his country's political differences with the Soviet Union came in rather casual references, at the very end, to Afghanistan and to human rights.

During the rest of the congress, the delegates were treated to a truly extraordinary banquet of information. In more than forty colloquiums, panel discussions, and forums, there were technically rigorous yet admirably clear discussions, by experts from several countries, of everything from Soviet and American national policies on nuclear arms to the lessons of Chernobyl; from the history of test-ban agreements to the possible uses of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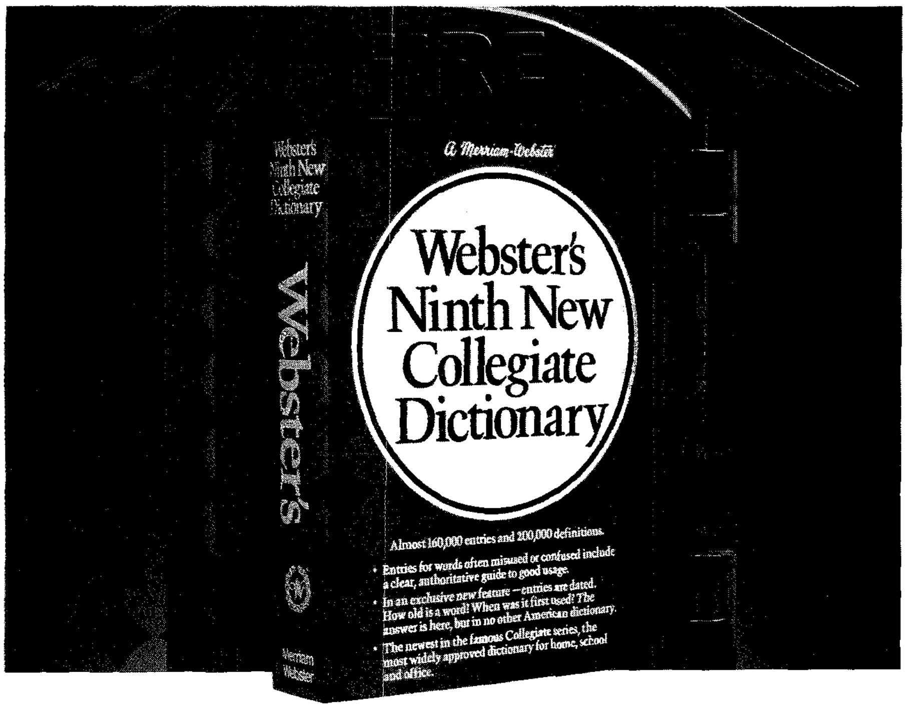

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space for peaceful purposes; from nuclear proliferation to studies on children and nuclear war.

In planning this congress, the American leaders of I.P.P.N.W. had wanted from the beginning to stage a debate in Moscow on Star Wars. Two months before the congress, the Boston staff invited Lieutenant General James Abrahamson, the head of the Strategic Defense Initiative office in the Pentagon, to suggest a speaker to take the Administration's side in the debate. A retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, Robert Bowman, who had headed research on space weapons in the Pentagon under Presidents Ford and Carter, had agreed to take the negative side. General Abrahamson referred the request to the National Security Council, in the White House, and word eventually got back to I.P.P.N.W. that Lieutenant General Colin Powell, the deputy of the national-security adviser, Frank Carlucci, had ruled against accepting the invitation. It seemed then that the Reagan Administration had decided to boycott the congress, thinking its doctors patsies for the Soviets. But something—perhaps the mediation of Ambassador Matlock, or perhaps a realization that the doctors did indeed have the ear of Gorbachev—had changed the mind of the White House. At the last minute—just a few hours before Colonel Bowman was scheduled to deliver his half of a non-debate—Ambassador Matlock sent word that he himself would take the affirmative side.

The Ambassador spoke first in the debate, in a vein of quiet reason and common sense. Acknowledging that he was not a specialist in either military matters or technology, he urged the audience to consider the desirability of weapons designed to attack weapons, not people. He granted that nobody knows whether S.D.I. will work, but said that in view of the possibility that defensive weapons could insure peace it seemed to make sense to see whether they would. "The Soviet Union," he said, "has a comparable program, which antedates our own. . . . The research programs are virtually identical. The only difference . . . is that we talk about ours, because we have to get appropriations from Congress, and the Soviets don't talk about theirs." The American system, S.D.I., would not be deployed until the numbers of offensive weapons on both sides had been greatly reduced, he said, and he courteously listed General Secretary Gorbachev's objections to S.D.I. and then begged to differ with them.

The Bowman response was long, concrete, fiery, and sarcastic. First, projecting slides on a huge screen, he explained the technology of proposed laser defenses in space. One American notion, he said, is to destroy ninety-six per cent of attacking missiles in the first forty to three hundred seconds after liftoff, when the missiles are in their boost phase. Heat-seeking sensors out in space would react at once to the flames of their takeoffs. Then powerful lasers on the ground would direct beams at dozens of huge relay mirrors orbiting the earth more than twenty thousand miles up. Separate "brain" satellites would direct the bouncing of the beams to hundreds of "fighting" mirrors in low orbit and would aim the twice-reflected beams at the rising rockets to destroy them. There would be other, subsequent layers of defense as well, designed to demolish enemy warheads as they coasted through space and as they approached their targets. Bowman went into enough of the endless technological difficulties of designing such a complex network of defenses to make the whole enterprise sound like an insane fantasy. In particular, he suggested that it would take decades to devise computer programs that could manage this vast network in such a way as to destroy almost all enemy missiles in the first three hundred seconds, at most, of their flight. And then—Bowman threw up his hands—what about the job of "debugging those suckers," to make sure that nothing could ever go wrong?

Suddenly, Bowman broke off his technical argument. There was a long pause. "Star Wars," he finally said, "has nothing to do with defense."

The real purpose of S.D.I., he declared, is to make sure that a first strike of offensive weapons would be easy and effective. It is, he said, a plan for an offensive system disguised as a defense: it would be designed to seize control of space by destroying all of an enemy's orbiting satellites for detection and communication. When that had been done, an offensive first strike could be launched with some assurance of success. The explosive missiles—"kinetic-energy kill vehicles"—that Secretary Weinberger wants to put in place even before laser weapons have been perfected are designed for exactly this task. Of course, the reciprocal trouble with this offensive design, Bowman pointed out, is that our own detecting and communicating satellites are perfectly visible in the sky and could themselves be shot down as an enemy prepared for a first strike of its own.

Ambassador Matlock, who had been so diplomatic in his first argument, showed signs in his rebuttal of losing his temper at this accusation of Bowman's. He accused Bowman of overheating his argument with emotion, and of putting forward "some half truths and some assertions which are not fully correct . . . I can assure you." He then said, with flushed cheeks and heavy emphasis, "There is no plan and no intent to use the strategic-defense program to gain military superiority. If that were our intent, why are we proposing binding treaty commitments to deprive ourselves of the weapons systems that would permit us to do some of these things that we're being accused of doing?"

Colonel Bowman answered that such an assurance was meaningless. The giveaway, he said, is what the weapons are designed to do. "The dream of defense rather than offense has been totally abandoned by all the proponents [of S.D.I.] save, perhaps, President Reagan, who may not understand the distinction." And of commitments Bowman said, "We are already bound by a treaty—the A.B.M. Treaty, Article Five, Paragraph One of which says, 'Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy anti-ballistic-missile systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based.' Period. End of paragraph. As this Administration has creatively said, 'Well, this is not a component we're testing, it's a sub-component, and this is not a prototype, it's a pre-prototype, and these aren't tests anyway, they're merely ex-

"What posture are you assuming in your pas de deux with life today?"

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periments.' In a similar way, future Presidents, if we let this precedent go, could play fast and loose with future treaties."

IN arguing the unreliability of military technology during the debate, Colonel Bowman had an apt illustration at hand, because just four days earlier the Kremlin's radar cockerel had snoozed. Late that afternoon, Colonel Bowman had happened to be in the restaurant on the top floor of the Rossiya Hotel, near the center of town, making a reservation for dinner. Looking out the window while he was waiting for the headwaiter, he saw a small, single-engine plane winging in at a low altitude from across the Moscow River. Its flight pattern, so low and right toward the Kremlin, seemed very odd to him. (Bowman used to be a test pilot, and flew more than a hundred missions in Vietnam.) "I watched this light aircraft circle Red Square three times," he later told me. "It dipped down and disappeared between St. Basil's and the Kremlin wall, descending to an altitude of maybe thirty feet, then went up again to perhaps two thousand feet and flew in a big rectangle, with left turns, for half an hour." Finally, it swooped down, just missing GUM, and landed in Red Square. Several I.P.P.N.W. delegates were out sightseeing that evening, and one of them, a British doctor named Robin Stott, caught the landing on videotape. Out of the plane stepped nineteen-year-old Matthias Rust, who had flown unchallenged for more than four hundred miles across Soviet territory. So much for the saluted Border Guards. Dr. Stott sold his home movie to NBC, two days later, for twenty-five hundred dollars, which he contributed to the anti-nuke cause.

By his adventure, the daredevil West German boy gave Mikhail Gorbachev a gift from Heaven: a good reason for shaking up the Soviet high command, in some offices of which there might be presumed to lurk resistance to nuclear disarmament, and certainly to reductions in military budgets—types of resistance that are also to be found in Washington, in the Pentagon.

Apart from an understandable touchiness on the part of Muscovites for a couple of days after this ludicrous penetration of Soviet defenses, I found the Russians far more cheerful and courteous than I remembered their being forty years ago. Of course, they had suffered horrors during the war, but, quite beyond their mourning and exhaustion then, they made a visitor feel their xenophobia. When the censor in the press department of the Foreign Office crossed out a paragraph in an article about Shostakovich that I had written, in which I had reported his having been punished by the authorities for his "formalism," she also lectured me as a barbarous and backward person who could not possibly know anything about Russia's treasures of music. Once in a train, once on the street, sneering Russian Army officers, objecting to I knew not what (my clothes? my facial expression?), contemptuously barked out, "*Nekulturnyi*," meaning that I was uncultured—or, in the vernacular, gross. This time, it seemed rather fine to be an American. The first reflex of any Russian in any encounter was still an icy face, but the slightest effort of manners would bring a warm interpersonal *glasnost*. There were occasional expressions of a slightly skeptical envy. Father Theodore Hesburgh, who was one of the speakers at the doctors' congress, told me that a Russian had said to him, "We aren't afraid of you Americans, we're afraid of your computers," adding, "And ours are worse than yours."

Another form of envy—imitation—struck me as deplorable. In that earlier time, even at the ballet and the opera the audience, which came from factories and offices in a system of rotation of tickets to the general public, was dressed in what I thought of as purely Russian fashions, the men mostly wearing plain quilted jackets that buttoned all the way up to high collars, the women arriving with scarves over their heads and wearing rather simple dark dresses, often of knitted fabrics. Now I was sad to see the people on the streets in the homogenized styles that are helping to blur all the cultures of the world—men in jackets and neckties, just like mine, women in flowered dresses that might have

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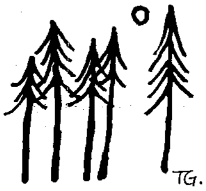
come from J. C. Penney, and many younger people in jeans and leather jackets and T-shirts. They might as well have been in Chicago—or Tokyo, or Rome. So, of course, might the Mezhdunarodnaya Hotel, with its television set in every room, its hairdressing salon, its saunas and exercise machines, its ice-cream parlor, its coffee shop, its bars, its bowling alleys, and even its arcade of coin-operated electronic amusement machines.



I found some surface comparisons of Moscow with New York rather painful. Moscow's main streets were immaculate. None that I saw were dug up. The famous subways were quiet, graffitiless, and relatively uncrowded. Above the tunnel opening at the far end of each station was a digital timer that registered the intervals between trains, and in a station where I watched for a while the clock never got above a minute and three-quarters. (As the seconds ticked off on the timer, I reflected on the supposed ability of authoritarian governments to make trains run on time, and wondered whether there is some ineluctable link between civil liberties and a sloppy infrastructure.) The city and its suburbs had literally hundreds of big and little parks, and here the urban population could keep a vivid sense of connection with the forests of folk memory. The greenery this time made a sharp contrast with wartime Moscow, when most of the trees throughout the city had been cut down for firewood. Nowhere in Moscow did I see beggars or homeless people in public places—though I was to have powerful reminders, later in my visit, that some Soviet citizens, who could aptly be called homeless, live far out of sight in extremely vile durance.

The Russians now seemed calmer and less abrasive toward each other than in that earlier, harsher time. A taxi-driver with whom Taya and I were riding one day wanted to get from the middle to the right lane of a boulevard, but an immense tractor-trailer blocked his way. At a stoplight, the cabbie tried to signal to the truck driver, high up in his towering cab. The latter, evidently unable to understand what the waving so far below meant, climbed all the way down, politely asked what the taximan wanted, said he would be glad to give way, and scaled the cliff of his cab again. He let us by. I found it hard to imagine such civility on Third Avenue.

Numerous car owners in Moscow supplement their incomes by taking passengers for money, somewhat after the manner of New York's gypsy cabs. I have never experienced—not even in Italy—such aggressive driving as a couple of these volunteer cabbies gave us. One drove along a boulevard with his speedometer needle registering more than a hundred kilometres an hour, and cut between other vehicles with a paint-thickness of space to spare, until I finally cried out that I had come to Moscow to observe, not to die. At that, Taya asked for moderation. Thereupon the driver—perhaps xenophobia was not quite dead, after all—frowned and accelerated. He got a disturbing comeuppance when we reached the Mezhdunarodnaya. A very tall policeman, one of a flock at the mouth of the hotel driveway, stopped him, got him out of the car, and asked him for his driver's license, his official permit to take passengers, and his internal passport. We left him under investigation.

Despite what I had been reading about the new United States Embassy building in Moscow, I felt much less paranoid about Soviet surveillance of foreigners this time than I had in the forties. Back then, I had been made very aware of the network of informers in the Metropole, and a plumber who came to repair my toilet actually whispered that I shouldn't have him fix a swishing sound it was making, because the noise was helpful—it was jamming the listening devices in the room. This time, on registering at the Mezhdunarodnaya, I was given a card, a kind of minipassport, which I was supposed to show to the plainclothesmen at the hotel entrances every time I entered, but it appeared to me that these men—mostly husky bulletheads straight from cartoons of the K.G.B.—were suffering from the lassitude Gorbachev had been criticizing at all levels of Soviet enterprise, for one could walk right by them as they lounged, gossiping and chaffing each other. Similarly, there was much less suspicious control of a journalist's work. In that epoch of Stalin, no appointment could be made without the permission (seldom given) and the intervention (often negative) of the press department of the Foreign Office; now one could simply call a person's office or home number and make a date to talk, and go and do it without fear of being followed.

THE new I.P.P.N.W. credo, "What We Believe," asserted as a "*mathematical certainty*" that some vital parts of the complex systems of men and machines which at present restrain fifty thousand nuclear warheads, deployed worldwide for purposes of deterrence, will someday fail and cause a nuclear war. One of the most mind-boggling sessions of the congress was that which dealt with this conviction. It was chaired by Herbert Abrams, a founding member of the organization; he is a diagnostic radiologist who has become an expert on the danger of inadvertent nuclear war, and he now lectures on this at the Stanford University Center for International Security and Arms Control. Here is some of what he had to say:

At 2:26 A.M. on June 3, 1980, the United States' North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) missile-warning system sighted two Soviet submarine-launched ballistic missiles on their way toward the continent. Soon afterward, many more were sighted. Strategic Air Command crews were scrambled to start their planes. The Commander-in-Chief of NORAD consulted with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others in what is called a Threat Assessment Conference—the last of a series of alert procedures before the man who must press the button is called in. The President's personal command-post plane was warmed up. The plane carrying the command communications system for the Pacific Fleet took off from Hawaii. Three minutes and twelve seconds after the first signals, the alert was cancelled. It took several days to discover the cause of the false alarm: a forty-six-cent computer chip in a NORAD communications multiplexer had malfunctioned.

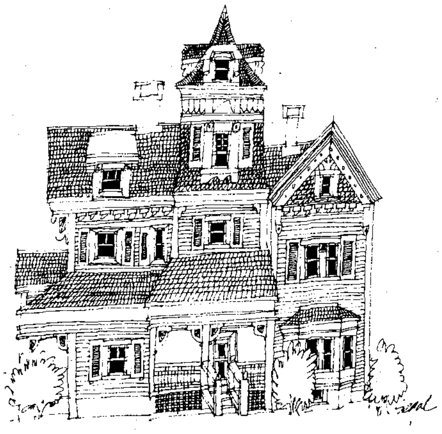
Such an event is called, in Pentagon code, a "broken arrow." The Department of Defense has listed thirty-two American broken arrows in the years between 1950 and 1980. Human beings caught all those false alarms. Two hazards, however, have become more and more worrisome. One is that a false alarm might not be caught in time—that human error somewhere in the vast network of control, especially in a period of international tension, might cause a war that is neither intended nor even remotely wanted. And the other is that, with weapons systems becoming so complex, and the flight times of some of them so short, there is great pressure for reliance on an automated response, or so-called "launch-on-warning," with the decision whether to go to war necessarily made by fallible computers rather than by fallible officers.

About a hundred and twelve thousand Americans are involved in the handling of nuclear weapons in silos, bombers, and submarines, and almost fifteen thousand more manage tactical and theatre nuclear weapons. Through a Personnel Reliability Program, the Pentagon makes every effort to choose people for these jobs who are made of oak. The program requires that individuals must be decertified for negligence, serious infractions of law, repeated abuse of drugs or alcohol, or any other behavior that might cause accidents. The outfall has been alarming; there appear to have been worms in the hardwood. According to Defense Department figures, some fifty-one thousand people in these highly sensitive jobs were decertified between 1975 and 1984—an average of more than five thousand a year. More than half of them were disqualified for alcohol or drug abuse or for psychiatric problems. Abrams has collected some equally disturbing data on the high incidence of strokes and acute myocardial infarction in American Presidents since 1900 and in Soviet leaders since 1917, and he told of the effects such illnesses have had on the ability of these men to make quick decisions about fateful matters at moments of crisis.

The time these button-pressers would have to make up their minds is getting shorter and shorter. Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles would take between twenty-five and thirty minutes to reach American missile silos. Soviet submarine-launched missiles would take between eight and fifteen minutes to reach them but only five or ten minutes to reach Washington. It would take infrared satellites and the outermost radar ring about two minutes to flash the first warnings of an ICBM attack, and between twelve and fifteen minutes could pass before the early-warning system could confirm the attack. In case of an alarm of mixed intercontinental and submarine-launched missiles, the President—if it is assumed that he might decide to counterattack without even waiting for a thorough check on whether the alarm was real or false—would have only between three and twenty minutes to make up his mind. And if the S.D.I. laser system that Colonel Bowman had described were to be deployed, depending for its success on destroying most of the enemy missiles during their first boost phase, its work would have to be done within—at most—five minutes after the enemy missiles lifted off. In other words, there would be no practicable choice but to depend on computer software for the fatal decision.

"Debugging the suckers," as Colonel Bowman had put it, would be impossible, because the only way to give S.D.I. computer programs a full-scale test would be in a nuclear war. S.D.I. software would require between ten million and fifty million lines of program code; the space shuttle, by contrast, has about half a million lines in its code. Two Mariner space flights had to be aborted because tiny errors were tucked away in all the lines of the code: a period in place of a comma in one, omission of the word "not" in the other.

IT has been reported that the dramatic reforms Gorbachev is pressing on his people may be in jeopardy, not only because of the resistance of conservative ideologues ("conservative," Orwell would have pointed out, here meaning far left) but also because of the weight of Soviet bureaucracy. A member of the I.P.P.N.W. staff told me that the task of getting hundreds of foreign doctors settled in Moscow, and tended once they were there, had convinced the American staff members that the bureaucracy could indeed slow Gorbachev down. He said that the hosts were relentlessly hierarchical, and put so much energy into the care and feeding of V.I.P.s that the staff had to fight for the bare survival of their ordinary delegates. "Russian business methods strike us as inefficient to the point of irresponsibility," he said. He saw the difficulties as being cultural, presumably just as prevalent in czarist times as now. Most of the bureaucrats that the staff had been dealing with postponed decisions on difficult or unpleasant matters as long as possible—often until too late. The division of labor among them, he said, was so minutely defined and so rigid that many complex questions had to go up the line toward some junction of authorities, often very far, before an answer could be given. "They are," he said, "the world's greatest ass-coverers."



My own feeling, in my role as a tourist, was that the Soviet Union, like the other great socialist power, China, may soon be buried under deep drifts of paper. Every move one makes in either country is recorded on large forms in triplicate. Gorbachev might do worse than to look into the way a guest in the Mezhdunarodnaya has to make reservations in three of the hotel's restaurants. The guest applies to the headwaiter, and the headwaiter tells him he must go to the hotel's service bureau, upstairs. The clerk in the service bureau says a reservation will not be possible. If the guest doesn't lose his temper, the clerk softens and calls the headwaiter on the phone. The headwaiter tells the clerk that a reservation will not be possible. The clerk is now on the side of the guest. A long argument ensues. The clerk hangs up, fills out a form in triplicate, hands two copies of the form to the guest, and nods toward a cashier's booth across the way. There the guest submits the form. It is further written on by the cashier, and the cashier gives a paper ticket to the guest. The guest later gives the ticket to the headwaiter, and the headwaiter keeps the ticket, possibly for a future check against one of the three forms in the service bureau, and shows the guest to a table.

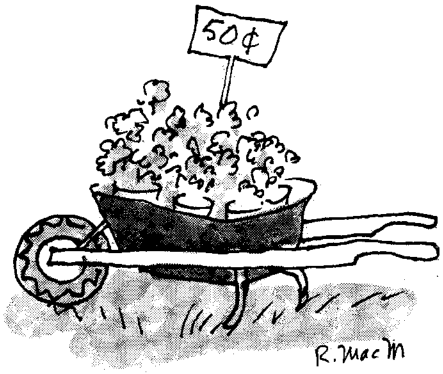
The food, once the guest is seated, is, of course, far better than it was in 1945, when wartime austerity had reached its ultimate pinch. The only meat that foreign correspondents got at the Metropole then was that of a bird we called Kremlin crow; we dined every night on canned rations doled out to us by the American Embassy. The one thing we could get plenty of, oddly, was caviar. Today, there is far less everyday caviar but a bountiful supply of delicious saturated fats. It has been said that cholesterol and nicotine may be greater hazards to the Soviet Union than nuclear weapons. Tables groan with sausage, pâté, egg yolks, red meats, pastries, and deep-fried everything, and at least three-quarters of the smog that blankets Moscow these days must be cigarette smoke. Gorbachev is trying—fairly successfully, I was told—to dissuade Soviet citizens from getting drunk so much. At receptions for the doctors' group, there were endless supplies of *zakuski*, the fatty hors d'oeuvres that Russians have always eaten with their drinks in order to stay sober, but no vodka, or even wine, to go with them.

At one of these receptions, I ran into Yevgeni Yevtushenko, who was just back from a visit to the United States. He was explosively excited about *glasnost*. He said that on his return he had found that the literary magazine *Novy Mir* had published a novel by Andrei Platanov, "The Foundation." "Denied publication in the Soviet Union for sixty years!" he said exultantly. "We have no censorship now." Then he circumspectly corrected himself: "We have almost no censorship now."

THE single immediate political goal of I.P.P.N.W. is a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. Since Reagan's objection to a ban is the presumed difficulty of verification, the doctors had scheduled a colloquium on this subject. The colloquium had been preceded by years of effort. In 1984, Dr. Lown called on the American and Soviet governments to start a series of reciprocating initiatives—each superpower taking a bold step, which would then be matched by the other—and he argued that the first such move should be a halt to nuclear testing. Every United States President from Eisenhower to Carter had actively sought a comprehensive test-ban treaty with the Soviet Union. Carter broke off negotiations when the Russians invaded Afghanistan, and Ronald Reagan has been against reopening them, on the ground that reliable verification to detect cheating would not be feasible. So what Lown seemed to be suggesting was that Gorbachev should unilaterally halt testing, in the hope of getting a matching response from Reagan. Lown's Russian colleagues said they were not ready to back unilateral initiatives at that time; given their standing in the Kremlin, this could be taken to mean that the Soviet government was not ready to undertake them.

In the autumn of 1984, Lown, who was convinced that a first move of this sort by the Russians would bring the pressure of American public opinion to bear on the Reagan Administration, went to Moscow to push his idea. He got Chazov to set up appointments for him with officials at the Foreign Office and in the Supreme Soviet, and at these meetings Lown, a persuasive and stubbornly persistent advocate, urged them to support a unilateral moratorium. Early the next year, Chazov and Kuzin visited the United States, and at a press conference in Los Angeles, after Mayor Tom Bradley gave the Russian doctors keys to the city, Chazov and Lown told reporters that they had just signed a joint statement, calling on the two governments "to declare an immediate, mutual moratorium on all nuclear explosions, [to] remain in effect until the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty." On July 1, 1985, at the next I.P.P.N.W. congress, the organization's International Council voted to make a test ban its central goal. Less than a month later, Gorbachev announced that on August 6th the Soviet Union would stop testing and would observe its moratorium until the end of 1985, or indefinitely if the United States also discontinued its tests.

On December 10, 1985, while the Nobel Prize ceremony was being held in the main hall of Oslo University, demonstrators in the frigid street outside carried signs reading "FREE SAKHAROV" and "FIND NEW FRIENDS, DR. LOWN." A week later, Lown and his friend Chazov were received by Chazov's friend Mikhail Gorbachev in the Kremlin. The Soviet moratorium had only a few more days to run. Chazov had led Lown to expect a ten-minute chat, and had said that since he himself and Mikhail Gorbachev were indeed old friends, he would let Lown do most of the talking. The conversation lasted for nearly three hours, and Lown spent much of that time urging Gorbachev to extend the moratorium for a minimum of three months. Gorbachev asked why he should extend it when the United States wouldn't even discuss the matter. Lown argued that an extension would help mobilize public opinion in both the Soviet Union and the United States. He was critical of the Soviet handling of its publicity about the original moratorium, suggesting that not enough had been done to make Americans aware of the opportunity for an easing of tensions which was being offered to their government. He also suggested that the release of Andrei Sakharov from his internal exile in Gorki would help gain support in the United States for progress on nuclear negotiations.

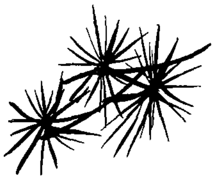


Three weeks later, Gorbachev announced that the moratorium would be extended for three months. Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin wrote Lown, "I take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts to bring about a Soviet-American accord on nuclear tests, and inform you that in making a decision to extend the nuclear-explosions moratorium, your thinking in this regard has been taken into account." While this was far short of an assertion that I.P.P.N.W. had tipped the balance of the decision, the fact that the Ambassador had been directed to write the letter did suggest that the organization's asymmetry had, after all, had a value—from the point of view of the American doctors.

Now, in the Sovincentr, Dr. Thomas B. Cochran, a nuclear physicist from the National Resources Defense Council, which is a nongovernmental agency in the United States that provides legal and scientific support for all sorts of environmental causes, including opposition to nuclear arms, brought the delegates up to date.

On May 28, 1986, a group of American scientists belonging to the National Resources Defense Council agreed with the Soviet Academy of Sciences to establish and man seismic monitoring stations near the principal nuclear-weapons-test sites in both the United States and the Soviet Union. They wanted to show the Reagan Administration that verification would not really be an obstacle to a test ban, and that Soviet and American scientists could coöperate to make reliable verification within the Soviet Union and the United States work.

That summer, Soviet seismologists from the Institute of Physics of the Earth and Americans from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, in La Jolla, California, and the University of Nevada at Reno jointly established three stations, at Karkaralinsk, Bayanaul, and Karasu, in a triangle surrounding the Soviet test site in the Kazakh Republic, on granite massifs several hundred metres above the surrounding steppe. The Soviets drilled holes to depths of as much as a hundred metres, and the teams installed in them six hundred thousand dollars' worth of state-of-the-art seismic and computer data-recording equipment that Scripps had procured. Relays of American and Russian scientists, living in trailers, manned the devices, which could detect not only nearby nuclear explosions but also distant earthquakes, and even American tests in faraway Nevada.



Then the American members of the research project invited five Soviet seismologists to this country in September to help choose sites for reciprocal monitoring stations around the United States' nuclear-test-ing site northwest of Las Vegas. The Reagan Administration delayed giving the Russians visas until after their scheduled time of departure from the Soviet Union, and when the Russians did arrive in the United States they were told that they would not be allowed to visit the proposed monitoring areas unless they first went to the American test site and witnessed a nuclear explosion and a demonstration of a monitoring device called CORRTEX (more or less an acronym for "continuous reflectometry for radius versus time"). Their visas were good for only seven days.

The Reagan Administration insists that if there is to be test verification both sides must use CORRTEX. The Soviets object that since CORRTEX has to be situated less than a hundred yards from the source of the explosion, and since accurate measurement would require detailed knowledge of the shape of the weapon cannister and of the test hole, the system would call for much too intrusive investigation by a verifying team. Reasonably accurate seismic verifications, by contrast, could be carried on from stations situated scores, and even hundreds, of miles away from the test hole. For these reasons, the Soviets would not let their seismologists watch a CORRTEX demonstration. The American team members took their Soviet colleagues to Scripps, and there, using slides, rock samples, and geologic maps, the two teams jointly chose three station sites around the Nevada test area—at Nelson and Troy Canyon, Nevada, and Deep Springs, California. The American team members are currently drilling bore holes at these stations, and when the installations begin monitoring, the Americans plan to transmit to their Soviet colleagues, by satellite, the data they pick up. ("If the Soviets cannot come to Nevada," Cochran said, "we will take Nevada to the Soviets.")

On February 12th of this year, the Soviet Academy of Sciences held a workshop in Moscow whose purpose was to compare CORRTEX with other seismic verification techniques. Two dozen scientists from eight countries attended. The Academy invited United States government experts on CORRTEX from Los Alamos National Laboratory and on seismology from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to attend. They did not. After the workshop, the Soviet Academy again offered to pursue discussions with Los Alamos and Livermore experts aimed at identifying the best method of monitoring the yields of tests. The Americans never answered.

Shortly after this workshop, the Soviet Union called off its nineteen-month unilateral moratorium and resumed testing. A few days before each test, on the theory that the surveillance had been designed only to detect cheating during a moratorium or a ban, a military official would fly to the joint Soviet-American monitoring stations and would require the teams to shut the instruments down and seal them; the day after the test, an official would return and the stations could be turned back on. Because of the difficulty of transporting the teams to each of the stations to reactivate them, this procedure has not worked well, and the instruments have been down about half the time since the resumption of testing.

Less than a month after the I.P.P.N.W. congress, however, the National Resources Defense Council signed a new agreement with the Soviet Academy of Sciences, under which the joint teams will be permitted to begin monitoring actual Soviet tests next January, at five new stations, about six hundred miles from the test area. At that distance, it will still be possible to detect tests of nuclear explosions equivalent to as little as tens of tons of TNT. This should allow adequate verification, since the lowest yield of American warheads at present is about a hundred tons; the average yield of American warheads is two hundred thousand tons. The National Resources Defense Council, en-

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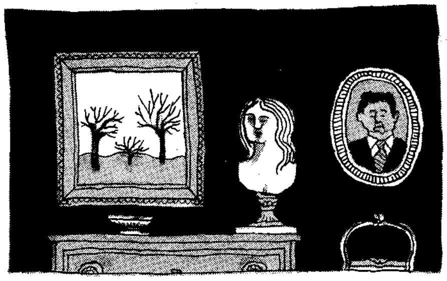
couraged by this opening up on the Soviet side, will try to persuade the United States government to take over the monitoring stations. That would clear the way for at least a limited test ban.

WHEN I.P.P.N.W. received the Nobel Peace Prize, the *Wall Street Journal*, in its editorial criticizing the award, suggested that it would have been more appropriate to give the prize to the Soviet Union's "real peace activists, such as the unofficial Moscow Group to Establish Trust between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A." Other papers agreed. Two months before the Nobel announcement, a Moscow court had sentenced one of the Trust Group's leaders, Dr. Vladimir Brodsky, to three years in prison, charging him with "malicious hooliganism" for, among other things, posting on his apartment walls photographs of the American peace movement which had been sent to him by Daniel Ellsberg. Another Trust Group leader, Alexander Shatravka, who had served a three-year term, had been sentenced to a further term, of four years, without ever having left the camp where he was being held. At Shatravka's first trial, a provincial court had accused him of hampering Soviet efforts to manipulate peace movements of the West, which, according to a court document, could be "effectively used in the struggle against imperialism." Several months later, Dr. Lown—acting, he would insist, as an individual, and not as co-president of I.P.P.N.W.—wrote to Dr. Chazov pleading for the release of the two imprisoned Trust Group leaders. Chazov passed the letter on to the Central Committee, and I.P.P.N.W. was able to announce at last year's congress, in Cologne, that the two men were indeed to be freed. Eventually, they were, and both emigrated. This was one of the first evidences of Gorbachev's new policy of amnesty for selected dissidents.

Having heard Dr. Chazov himself speak at the opening ceremony of the Moscow congress on the need for trust between Russia and America, I thought I should call on the present leaders of the Trust Group—who had expanded the name of their movement to the Group to Establish Trust Between the East and the West—to find out whether they themselves were now trusted by their own government. (It goes without saying that back in 1945 there would *not* have been a single dissident at large for me to visit.)

In a tiny apartment in a shabby building in the Moscow suburb of Tushino, a young historian named Andrei Krivov, his wife, Irina, and a colleague, Yevgeniya Debryanskaya, gave me their assessment of *glasnost*. (Two small children, who were decorating their faces with bright-colored stick-on sequins, were in and out of the room.) Some progress had been made, Krivov said. A street demonstration of theirs in February had lasted ten seconds; one in March had lasted ten minutes; and one in April had been allowed to go on for an hour and a half. On that third occasion, they had gathered two hundred signatures. A year ago, they said, such activity would have landed them in prison. The BBC was no longer jammed. *Pravda* was publishing articles from foreign papers. All this opening up, however, was "an enigmatic process," Krivov said—it was not occurring as a matter of right but being handed down in dollops from above. Some things could now be openly discussed that had earlier been unthinkable. But other matters—foreign affairs, for example—were still dangerous to talk about in public.

People who did not conform, Krivov said, could still be badly hurt. One day not long before, two hundred and fifty young artists, whose life style had caused them to be nicknamed "hippies," had demonstrated on Gogol Street, demanding the right to have a show of their paintings. Police cars arrived. When the painters sat down in the street, the cops beat them so severely that several had to be taken to the hospital with broken ribs. A young boy was nearly strangled to death. A week later, the Trust Group joined a demonstration protesting this savagery; the members carried slogans calling on the K.G.B. and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to respect the integrity of human beings. After the demonstration, several went to Police Station No. 5 to ask for the return of their passports, which the police had taken from them. Plainclothesmen blocked the entrance to the station, roughed up some of the demonstrators, brutally punched one of the women, and arrested fourteen people. After their release, the chief of Station No. 5 apologized, saying that the violence had been the fault of police from another station.



A few days before I talked with the Krivovs, the government-sponsored Soviet Peace Committee had held, in the Sovincentr, a conference of peace activists from all over the world. A number of the Western delegates knew about the Trust Group, and an Australian named Roderick Pitty got oral permission from the chairman of the Peace Committee for Irina Krivova to speak at one of the meetings. When Krivova and Pitty and others arrived at the hall the next day, however, they were stopped. An official named G. Lokshin was summoned. As Krivova tells the story:

Lokshin: I ask you to follow me.

Krivova: Why?

Lokshin: You and I have to talk about this and clear up the reasons you have come and what you plan to say and do here.

Krivova: I'm sorry, but I did not come here for a private conversation with you but for a meeting with representatives of Western peace organizations. Do you check their speeches beforehand as well?

Lokshin: Well, we have to acquaint you with the meeting's program and the agenda. Come along with us now.

Krivova: Thank you, but I've already familiarized myself with the program. (*Shows a copy of the program to Lokshin.*)

Lokshin (*to the foreigners*): What are you doing standing here? Go on, we'll figure things out by ourselves.

Pitty: We came here together, and we'll go with Irina. If you won't let her through, we'll leave the meeting place.

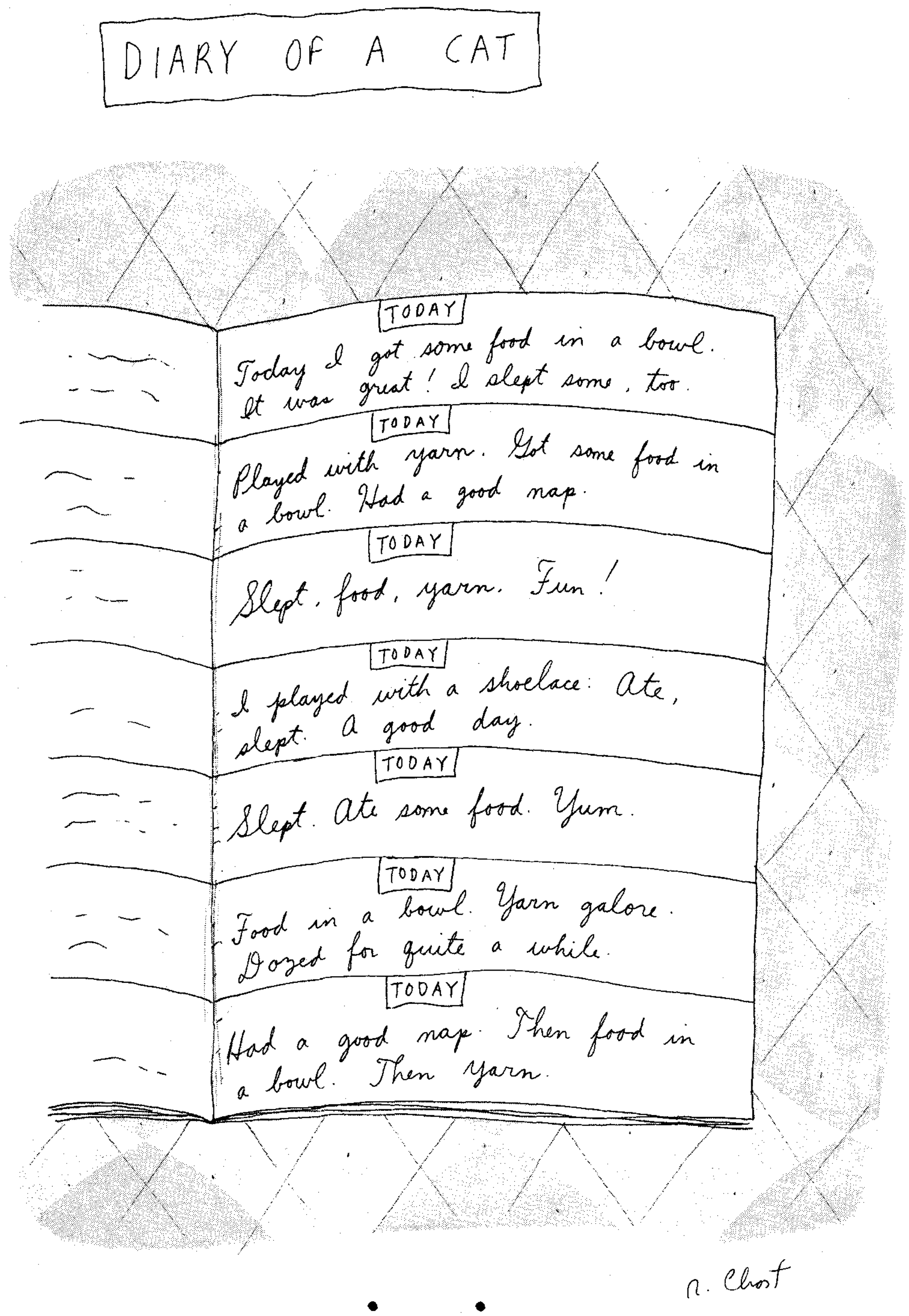
Lokshin (*to Pitty*): You can run things in Australia, but we're the bosses here, and we wish to clear things up on our own with this Soviet citizen. Don't cause a scandal. (*To Krivova*) What do you need these Western lawyers for?

Krivova: I haven't broken any laws, and I don't need any lawyers. These are my friends. And I'll repeat: I did not come for a conversation with you, but for a meeting with Western peace organizations and for a dialogue with them on an equal basis. . . .

Lokshin: Well, then, let's go. . . . Just keep in mind that we have a lot of people who would like to speak, and it's possible that your turn won't come around.

Five panels were in progress. With Pitty's intervention, Krivova got to speak in Group 4, on "International Security: Humanitarian Problems." As soon as she started speaking, word spread through the other lecture halls, and people from them poured into the Group 4 meeting room until the place was packed. She spoke of the aim of the Trust Group—"developing a dialogue between citizens of the East and of the West, a dialogue at the grass-roots level." She told her audience that she spoke as a woman and a mother, "concerned about my children's problems—the problems of education, moral upbringing, the relations between children and adults, children's status in society, and the influence on them of mass culture and the militaristic spirit." She went on to speak of the need for East-West exchanges on nuclear weapons and nuclear power, and on ecology, medicine, and human relations. "And, of course, the development of mutual trust is impossible without a normalization in the area of human rights," she said. "And Soviet citizens should be able to travel freely to and from the West." When Krivova had finished, speaker after speaker got up to say that the Trust Group's being able to take part in a government-sponsored meeting marked a historic turning point.

"But," Krivova said to me, "since we had to get permission for what it was our right to do anyway, this was *not* a historic breakthrough in the development of the peace movement in the Soviet Union." It was, though, both she and her husband acknowledged, a step.


DIARY OF A CAT
TODAY
Today I got some food in a bowl. It was great! I slept some, too.
TODAY
Played with yarn. Got some food in a bowl. Had a good nap.
TODAY
Slept, food, yarn. Fun!
TODAY
I played with a shoelace. Ate, slept. A good day.
TODAY
Slept. Ate some food. Yum.
TODAY
Food in a bowl. Yarn galore. Dozed for quite a while.
TODAY
Had a good nap. Then food in a bowl. Then yarn.
R. Chast

ON the last day of the congress, I had an appointment with Andrei Sakharov. Taya and I arrived exactly on time at the apartment house to which we had been directed; we rode to the seventh floor in a rickety metal-caged elevator and rang a doorbell. No answer. We rang and rang. Then Taya said she had seen a telephone booth on the sidewalk in front of the apartment house—she would call Sakharov's work number. We went down, and I could see her, in the glass booth, shake her head after she dialled. No answer. She started to try again, but then she ran out of the booth and said, "Here he comes." Down a sloping sidewalk, with a shuffling, cautious step, tall, portly, wearing thick glasses, in an oldish topcoat and a beret, came one of those Russian figures—Tolstoy, Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn among them—who from time to time have changed the way the whole world thinks of things. He quietly apologized for being late, and took us upstairs, into the apartment from which, on account of his beliefs, he had been exiled to the "closed" city of Gorki for seven years.

His wife, Elena Bonner, now came up the stairs from a lower floor and greeted us. She said that she and her husband had been granted a second apartment, downstairs, so there would be a living space and a workplace for him in the same building. The task of getting their living quarters rehabilitated after the long absence had been exhausting.

"I'm tired," she said, in English, holding her hand over her heart. "My heart is tired."

She suggested that we sit in the kitchen. I was shocked by the apartment, which was tiny, and not much grander, really, than that of the poor young historian of the Trust Group. The kitchen was no more than ten feet square. Bonner offered us tea.

Sakharov sat on a bench behind a small square table, with his back to a wall, leaning on a pillow. His wife left us to talk. We exchanged a few commonplaces about mutual friends, and then I began asking questions. Sakharov considered his answers, pausing to think a long time before giving each one, his lips moving slightly, as if in silent rehearsal. His teeth flashed with many drastic gold repairs. What I found overwhelming, as he began to speak, was his gentleness. From a distance, I had had a sense of the great power of a man who had rocked a harsh nation with his stubborn moral and physical courage, and I guess I had expected a booming and forceful presence. But when he spoke he did so very softly, almost never using the first-person pronoun, and with courteous pauses for Taya to translate his words.

I told him that I had been attending the I.P.P.N.W. congress, and that I understood he disagreed with the emphasis the physicians had for some time been putting on a test ban. I wondered if he would tell me why.

He said he simply believed that a test ban wouldn't protect us, because there are ways of verifying the combat capability of new types of nuclear weapons without resorting to nuclear tests. And he also believed that putting aside the issue of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban would make it easier to negotiate more urgent problems of disarmament.

I sensed his reluctance to quarrel with others who think, as he does, that the buildup of nuclear armaments is "not normal," as he put it, so I mentioned my talk with the Trust Group people, and this brought a long response.

"The issue of trust between East and West is central," he said. "We think that all honest people on both sides are striving to achieve it. It's a complicated, multilateral problem—not just one-sided. On our side, though, it is tied up with 'openness' and, especially, in my personal view, with human rights—with the freedom of expression of one's opinions.

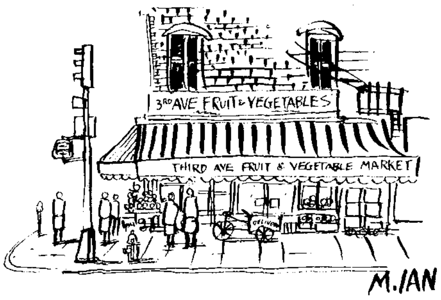
"There is much yet to be done. There are several articles in our Soviet criminal code that need revision—for example, Article 70 [on anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda carried on for purposes of subversion of the state] and Article 190-1 [on dissemination of deliberately fabricated anti-Soviet slander], both of which are being used in our trials, still today, to convict people for their beliefs. We've had proof of that for quite a few years—ever since the new criminal code of 1959. Article 70 is a carbon copy of a similar provision in the Stalin code—it was then known as Article 58—under which literally millions of citizens were sentenced to death.

"Today, the number of prisoners of conscience is relatively small. We know about five hundred by their names, and we can speculate that there are about the same number whose names we do not know. In the dimensions of the country as a whole, you see, we're not speaking of a huge number. But even those few are tremendously important.

"At the Plenary Session of the Supreme Soviet in January, Gorbachev mentioned this issue and said that he was preparing revisions of the criminal code. We don't know yet what changes he meant. Besides restriction of the uses of Article 70 and total elimination of 190-1, we think it's vital that there be changes in the parts of the code that regulate the conditions of servitude. These affect not only prisoners of conscience but criminals as well, because both live under conditions that are beyond imagination. There is not a single case of foreign correspondents having been given permission to see the prisons and camps where those prisoners are kept. That's how the authorities keep their system intact. The total number of prisoners in the country now is about a million and a half.

"Over the last three or four months, more than a hundred and sixty political prisoners have been released. They have all been prisoners of conscience. That's Amnesty International's phrase—one that separates them from those who call for violence against the state. These people have never called for violence, and that's why this appeal is not politically oriented but is purely humanitarian. As a result of our campaign, as I say, a hundred and sixty have been released, but their release has not been without conditions. Each person is required to appeal for clemency. That's unjust, and we are calling for unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience.

"We know of nineteen prisoners of conscience being held under the most brutal conditions at Labor Camp No. 36-1, at Perm. Most of the time, they are confined to their cells, which are frightfully cold in winter. They get hot food only once every second day. Only once a year can they see their wives, for a three-day period, and if the prison authorities aren't satisfied with the prisoners' behavior they forbid even those visits, and most of the nineteen haven't seen their wives in several years. They can receive parcels only toward the end of their terms. Medicines aren't allowed, or even tea. They are permitted one brief walk a day in a courtyard that has a net over the top. They never see the sky."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M.IAN

AFTER the physicians' congress ended, Mikhail Gorbachev received I.P.P.N.W.'s executive committee in the offices of the Central Committee, near the Kremlin. In the course of nearly two hours of conversation, he gave the organization his word that its views had had a bearing on Soviet foreign policy. According to a pooling of the recollections of the Americans who were there, he said, "We join with you in wanting to halt the arms race and abolish nuclear weapons," and he reiterated an offer he had first put forward in March—"to make great reductions in conventional weapons at any time." Then, resorting, after the Russian manner, to a homely simile, he said to the doctors, "Today, we have one specialist for the left nostril, one for the right nostril, one for the left ear, one for the right ear. Yet all parts of the human body are interconnected, and doctors cannot separate our single parts." So with the whole world, with its innumerable specialties in the fields of nuclear arms, the ecology, the burgeoning means of storing and communicating information, and in science and technology altogether. "We must remember we live in an interdependent world," he said. "The fact that various governments find themselves in different social systems does not negate this interdependence. . . . Security can't be gained only for us, or for anyone else, but only universally."

QUITE by chance, as I was leaving Moscow that day, I caught a living snapshot of an astonishing act of military hubris, of a sort that Gorbachev, in his struggle for reforms, and also Sakharov, fighting, in his different way, for a new kind of Russia, and Irina Krivova, wanting to protect her children from "the militaristic spirit," and the twenty-five hundred I.P.P.N.W. doctors from sixty nations, giving so much of their time to an effort to reduce the danger of nuclear war, all have to take into reckoning.

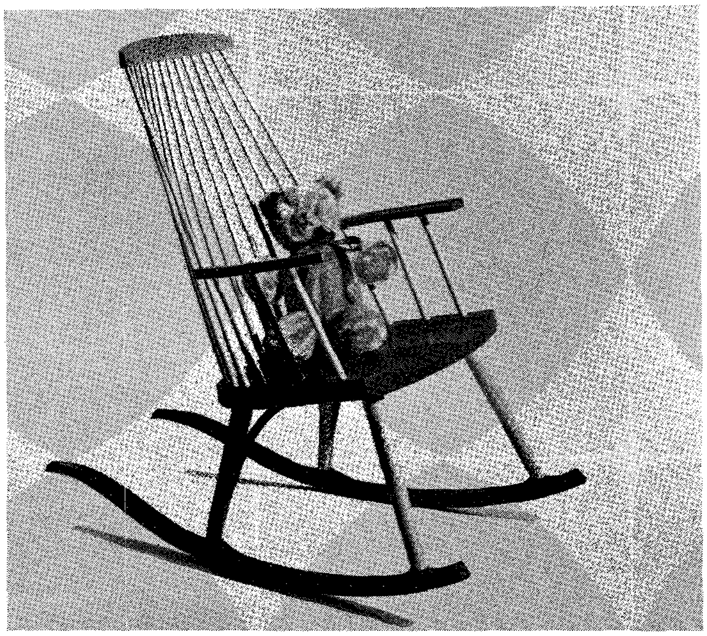
At the huge Sheremetyevo Airport, my wife and I were chatting with Taya and her husband in the V.I.P. lounge, where a departing passenger is relieved of all worry about tickets, passport, and luggage, and is serenely passed through, in good time, to the departure gates. As we talked, a group of about a dozen military men, all in the light-chocolate uniforms of Red Army officers, marched through at a fast clip, evidently to say goodbye to one of their number. We had a view of them only from the rear. A few minutes later, the group returned, minus the departing officer. As they entered a narrow passageway from the gate areas to the lounge, we saw, swiftly striding at the very front of the squad, a figure from Gogol. He was obviously a senior general. He had the massive, pyknic build of a Russian operatic basso, and on the left side of the huge barrel of his torso, from just under his chin to just above his belt line, there was an array of campaign ribbons and decorations so astonishing as to make one think of the medals all over the front of Jack Oakie in "The Great Dictator." Standing on one side of the passageway, with his back to the advance of the phalanx, was a foreign civilian gentleman, perhaps a diplomat, waiting for the return of his passport. Unfortunately, he was in the way. A look of astonishment at the effrontery of this blockage made the general's eyebrows shoot up under the visor of his cap. Without breaking stride, he swung his right arm far to the left and dealt the foreign civilian a sweeping backhand haymaker. This cleared the path for the Army. Not a man fell out of step. —JOHN HERSEY

●

JAMES JOYCE LIVES!

[*From the Chicago Tribune*]

There is a possibility, of course, current numbers—123 strikeouts miss on purpose, though judging by conand in. He could always swing long, hot summer of fastballs, up chomping for the coin toss after a the season and Jackson is in 295 and League West flag in the final Royals are chasing the American flict of interests. Suppose that the of that Bo will be tempted by a his week at- bats—proving that Bo whiffed on purpose would be a knotty case not to be solved in small claims court.



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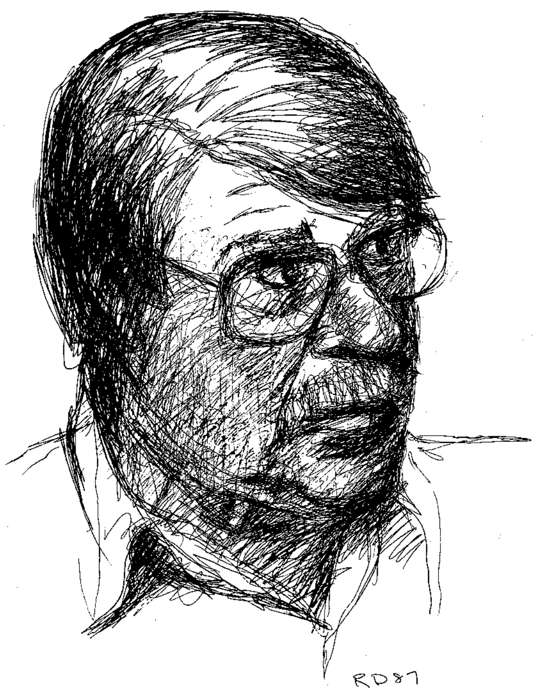


"I CAN tell as soon as he turns up at the garden gate," Phyllis Diebenkorn says. "I can tell if he's had a good day by the way he carries himself, whether he fumbles with his keys, whether he says hi. Just a few weeks ago, he came in and said, 'It's all over. I simply *cannot paint!*' The next morning, he left early and stayed in the studio all day without putting a single mark on the canvas, just trying to look at it in a new way. And then he came home and said, 'I think it's the best thing I've done.' "

By now, Phyllis Diebenkorn is used to her husband's unsparing criticism of his work. She's also used to his drastic shifts and reversals. She well remembers the first time he abruptly stopped painting in a way that had won widespread acclaim and started doing something else altogether—a kind of picture that many people felt was outmoded and unserious. "There'd been unmistakable feints in that direction," she recalls, "but, then, there'd been so many feints before. So it did sort of shake me up. Some people were terribly shocked. Remember that man, Dick, the one who'd been collecting you—the one who called you up on the phone and said, 'What have you done to the value of my paintings?' "

"I do indeed," Richard Diebenkorn says. "And actually even *you* were wondering what the devil I was up to."

"Your parents, at least, were thrilled," Phyllis says. "At last, they could identify the things in your paintings. As for me, I was just sitting there. I had taken a lot of time just getting used to what you were doing before you switched, and then you totally changed course. I was so puzzled. And probably a bit disappointed, too, though I never said so. What you'd started doing seemed a little square, and you'd trained me so carefully not to be square." They both smile. "But the second time—when you made that big change, in 1967—I'd been around for twenty-five years. So I figured you knew what you were doing—or would soon enough!"

Phyllis and Richard Diebenkorn met as students at Stanford during the Second World War. She is a tall, attractive woman and a careful if casual observer of human nature. She is also a brilliant diplomat—a master at applying, with considerable charm, the faintest possible quantum of conversational pressure in one direction or another; people appreciate her assumption that they have sensitive social gauges. One suspects that over the years she has had to deflect a fair share of nuisance calls, for her husband is one of the most respected painters in this country. Yet he is wary of the limelight, skeptical of praise. Despite early success, and a major travelling retrospective in 1977, Richard Diebenkorn still has an air of modesty and general disclaimer—an air decidedly off-putting to anyone itching to exercise a measure of admiration. Talking about his painting is something he doesn't relish. "Sometimes I feel I'm just being too lazy or cowardly to speak up," he'll tell you. "But at other times I do speak up, and then I may really regret the way I've phrased something."

Actually, Diebenkorn has the sort of pleasant bass voice and measured delivery that would suit a professional speaker. He also has something of the appearance of a leading man in an old-fashioned drawing-room comedy: the sculptural planarity, the dark emphatic eyebrows and mustache. If you were a sculptor and you were rough-cutting his head out of marble, the first thing you'd look for would be the gooseberry-shaped nose tip, which you'd want to have emerge from your stone with a singular saliency. Next would come the jutting chin, then the bushy brow; then the remaining features; and if, in your finishing work, you managed to reproduce the deep clefts running like parentheses from his cheeks to his chin—clefts that behave like dimples and help to give him his genial, kindly appearance—you could count yourself well on your way to getting a likeness.

DIEBENKORN and his wife live in Santa Monica Canyon, halfway up a road that winds through drifting flocks of roses and bougainvillea, through sprinklered lawns and low "Spanish-style" homes. Theirs is a white, L-shaped house fronting on a pavement of higgledy-piggledy bricks. The house curls protectively around a rich green lawn, bordered by flower beds and accessible through a swinging garden gate. Late one August afternoon, on the first occasion that Diebenkorn and I met to talk about his life as a painter, I was greeted at this gate by two rambunctious dogs—a beagle and a mutt—who were barking noisily and hurling themselves twice their height into the air, upstaging the artist. One of the dogs thrust a ball into my hand, and a furious game of go-fetch ensued. By the time it had slackened, the sun was hanging low in the western sky, and Diebenkorn's craggy, sixty-five-year-old face formed a picturesque pattern of light and shade. Though well over six feet tall, he had assumed his most democratic slouch, whereby he folds himself downward a good three inches.

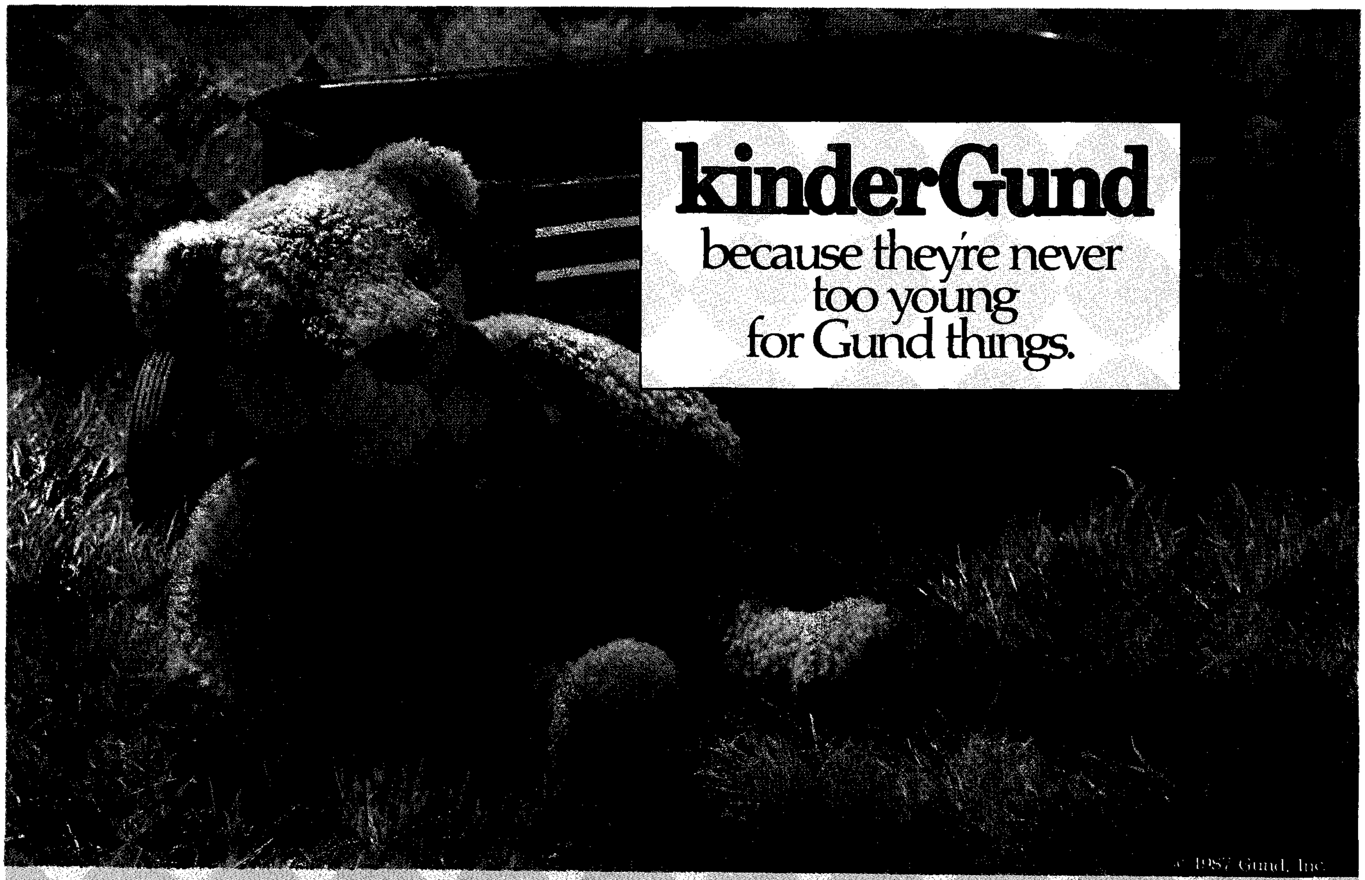
"How about a Bloody Mary," he suggested as I tossed the beagle a final fly ball. We walked across a patio and into the house. Beyond a little dining room lay a living room bathed in light. Here Diebenkorn motioned me toward a sofa and went into the kitchen to fix us a pair of drinks. It was pleasant in this house, spacious and mercifully unchic. During the twenty years or so of their life in Santa Monica, the Diebenkorns had evidently acquired a good many pictures and bibelots. Interspersed among these were quite a few pieces of his own, including several of the tiny and exquisite cigar-box lids that had recently been shown at the Brooklyn Museum. On the far wall of the living room hung one big painting, grayish and roughly worked, in which an unexpected rightness had been wrested from a mass of scumbles and see-through patches of paint.

In a moment, Diebenkorn was back with the drinks. "I usually sit in this Windsor chair to try a new piece out," he said. "I hang the piece on that wall in the dining room and look at it from in here. Unfortunately, I often find that things don't hold up, that they need more work." He twirled his Bloody Mary, eyes fixed on a small but complex painting hanging in the next room. "I guess I still like this one. I'd say it's—well, O.K. But I'd also like to see it sometime when I'm completely off guard—when I haven't got my picture-looking shoes on."

I asked him about the Indian miniatures that hung interspersed among his own pictures. There were a few I'd been especially admiring: a boldly designed figure painting and two elegantly simple drawings—one of a dog, one of a smiling, patrician-looking girl.

"My interest in Oriental miniatures probably came out of what Matisse did with them," he said. "They first came to my attention in 1954, in the stock of a well-known print dealer in San Francisco named Ray Lewis. Lewis, if I recall correctly, was then operating out of a couple of rooms on Sutter Street. His Persian and Mogul paintings were already expensive, but the Rajput ones, which I liked best, were still affordable; I never paid more than a hundred dollars for anything, and at the time even that seemed a bit expensive. I suppose that what Matisse liked best in the Persian painters was their way of filling space, though I wouldn't want to isolate anything as the mechanics of a piece—that sort of approach doesn't work. But there can be parts of a piece that you don't like, even though you like everything else. I bought a miniature once and then decided that I didn't like the color of the sky, so I painted it out. I guess that's a pretty appalling thing to do." Diebenkorn laughed and took a sip of his drink.

"You know, the longer I look at that painting in there the more I think I'll have to unframe it," he said. "There's just one little thing I'd like to change." He squinted, then fell silent for a bit. "It's hard for me to get an objective fix on my work. I try to hang on to one painting from every show I have, and I keep it around to see how it holds up. But what terrible luck I've had with the ones I've put aside! Visitors come, and I tell them 'Don't look at that!' and I spoil it for them—and for me, too, because sometimes I'll really like the very same piece a little later on. A work that I've had a problem with—well, I can look at it twenty years later and this error pops up and it's as if I'd just laid down my brush. All these years, my aesthetic has remained pretty much what it was in my early twenties. At that time, neither I nor any of my friends even dreamed of getting a dealer. What made our work possible was that we didn't think we were painting for history; we were just making individual pictures. If you don't assume a rigid historical mission, you have infinitely more freedom. One of the most interesting polarities in art is between representation, at one end of the stick, and abstraction, at the other end, and



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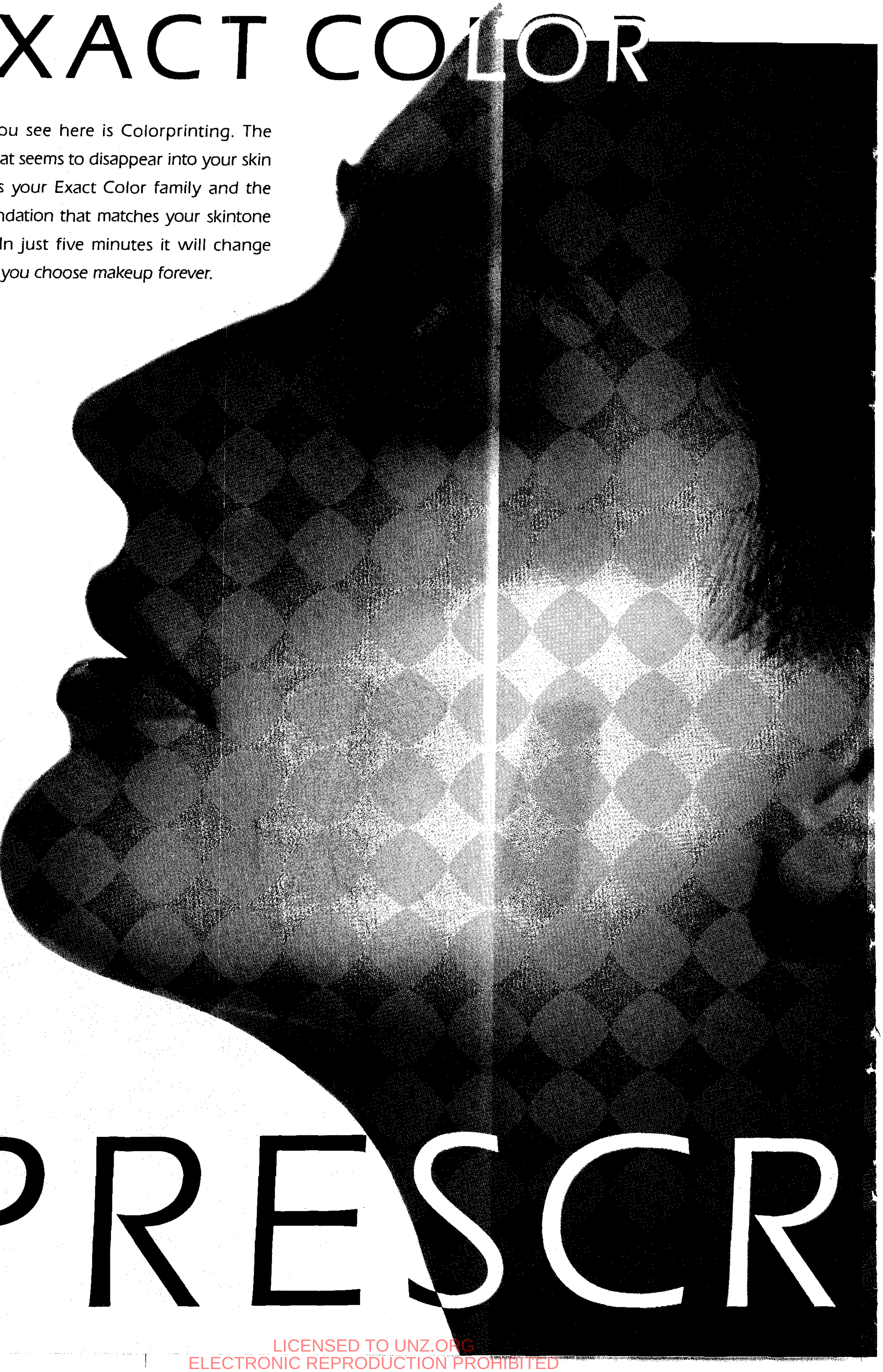

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I've found myself all over that stick. Another polarity is between the formal and the direct, or raw, and I've tried both of those alternatives, too. For twelve years, I rarely used a ruler, and then, about 1966, I started using it all the time. I'd tried to draw straight lines by hand; the problem was that I really didn't want gesture, or the way hesitation could seem like a lead into gesture. On the other hand, the thing about a straightedge is that it can totally tyrannize you in no time."

I mentioned Degas's discreet use of the ruler.

"Yes, well, when I taught drawing in San Francisco I used to bring in books of his work," Diebenkorn said. "One finds that one can see most Degas drawings as a matter of straight lines versus curves, which makes—don't you think?—for a marvellous simplicity."

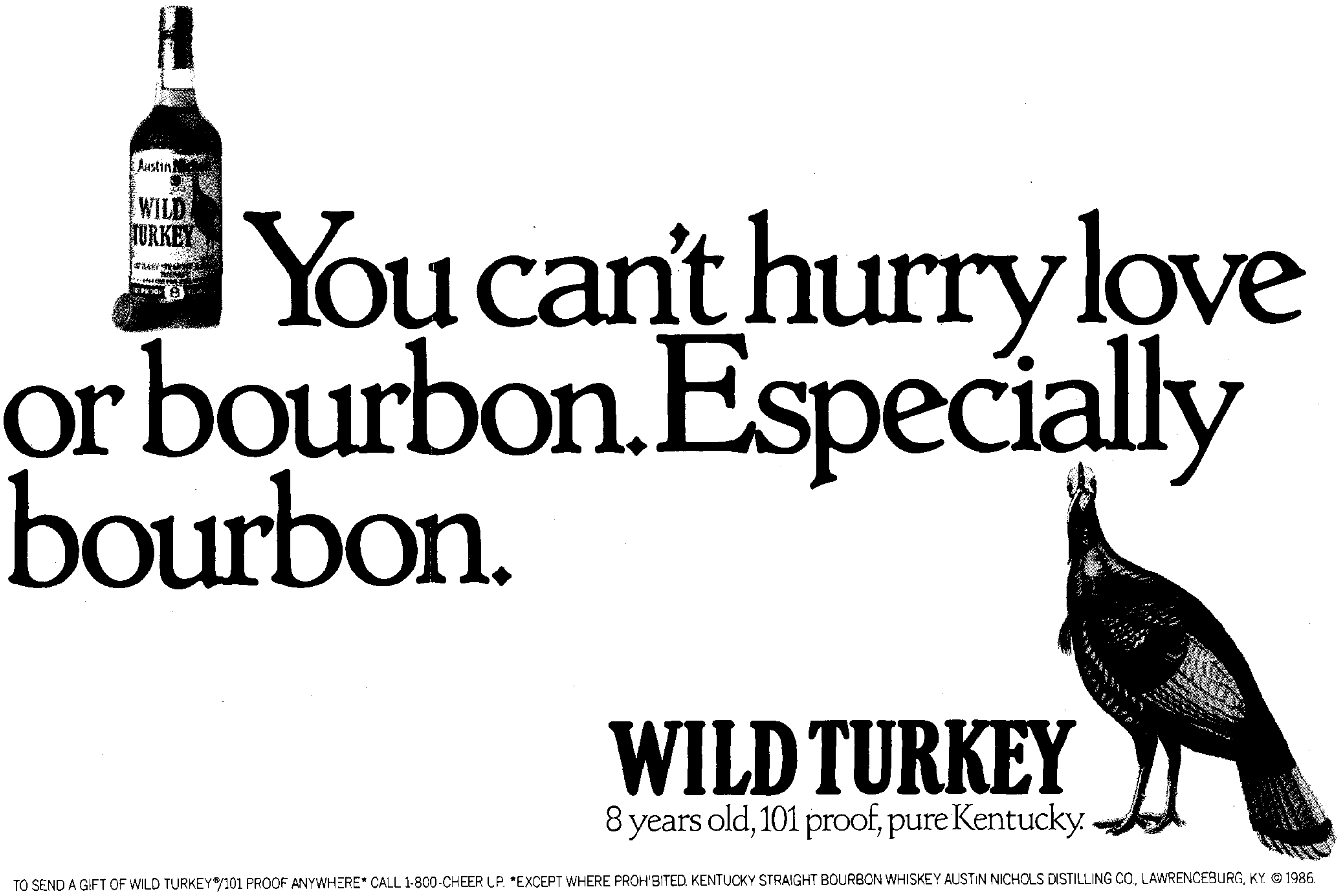
The sun was setting; in its warm, melancholy light, Diebenkorn's tan showed to advantage against his blue-and-white checked cotton shirt. Once, and then again, his bifocals caught a reflection from one of the dabs of sunlight hovering about the room. We talked our way through another round of drinks, and kept on talking until he turned on the lights. It was time for me to go, but I had one last question for him: I wanted his reaction to a certain not very recent but thorough and positive review of his work.

"Well, it was all very glowing," he replied. "But the writing had a *headlong* quality. It was this *headlong* aspect that I mistrusted. Not merely on aesthetic grounds, though it was the overdynamic quality of the thing, aesthetically, that made me distrust the substance. Perhaps I felt that it was simply too good to be true."

Had he stolen a march on me? Later, recalling this chat, I realized that this was the first time I'd seen a certain characteristic mood—a mood of chaste disenchantedness—steal slowly over him. But I was not to see—not this time, at any rate—where it might lead.

THE paintings that Richard Diebenkorn has completed since 1967 tend to be vertically oriented, and rather taller than a tall basketball player. Titled "Ocean Park" for the most part, they are consecutively numbered—though, as the series has evolved, some numbers have been left out. Diebenkorn has by now reached No. 140 of the series, so it must comprise several score pictures altogether. (Since nobody, including the artist, can ever remember what number belongs to what painting, they are very difficult to refer to.) The "Ocean Park"s are composed largely of vertical and horizontal bars and lines that separate or else lie over or under washy panels of color. These panels or fields are frequently quite delicate in hue—reminiscent at times of a half-cloudy day in the desert or at the beach—and transparent enough to reveal phantom undercoats or delineations beneath them. Diebenkorn is one artist who does not cover his tracks.

Ocean Park is the name of the Santa Monica neighborhood where he has worked for the past twenty years; glancing out the window of his studio, you notice a lot of the same things—the same color events, so to speak—that you see in his paintings. That diagonal shadow on that stucco wall, you find yourself thinking, is just like one of his muted-blue zones; the electrical wire travelling coincidentally down the diagonal shadow is just like one of his long charcoal strokes. It's for this reason, I suppose, that so many writers have concluded that Dieben-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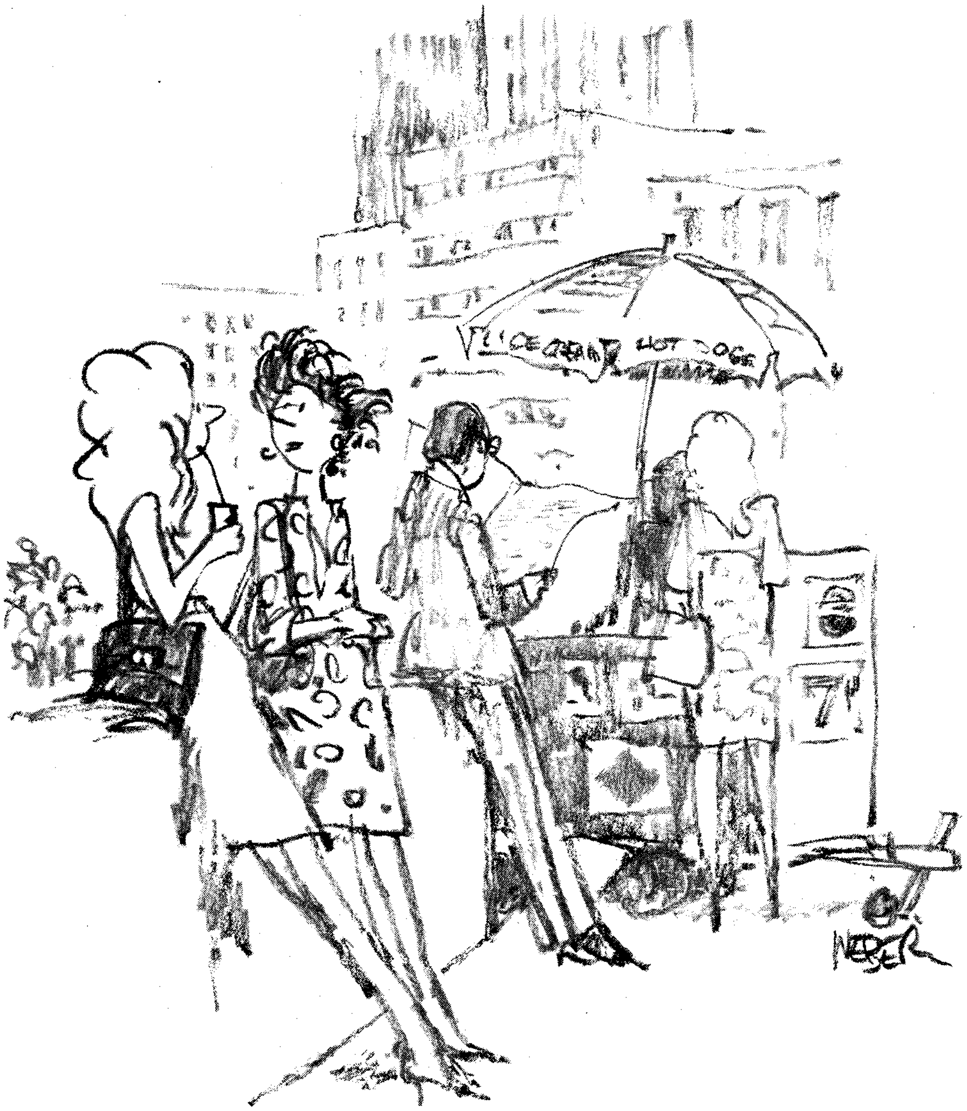
korn's paintings are a form of "tribute" to the California light—that he has "caught," like a prism, the glories of the Santa Monica sunshine. The only trouble with this pleasant notion is that painters love not exactly their subjects but, rather, what they find paintable in those subjects. "Non-painters often say, 'What a lovely light here,' but I myself don't see it," Diebenkorn told me. "My own approach is very different. I see the light only at the end of working on a painting. I mean, I discover the light of a place gradually, and only through painting it."



"For the sake of a good relationship, I'd even consider leaving New York. Right now, I'm looking at somebody in Poughkeepsie."

• •

Diebenkorn develops his pictures spontaneously, without benefit of preliminary studies; no form of preparation has ever proved of much help. Once, he did a watercolor on graph paper and tried to enlarge the image on a big canvas. "I blew it up, but then I gradually painted it out," he told me. "All in one day! But I had great pleasure doing it." Because he is fond of quirky rectangular grids, one of his main concerns is integrating the horizontal and vertical elements of a composition, yet he has never tried to find a repeatable way to go about this. "A *way* is just what I don't want," he says. "With each new painting, I find a way all too soon, and that's when the trouble starts." Though he likes some reference to the deep space of landscape, he must prevent a picture from opening up into something like the indistinct background of an aviation or sci-fi movie poster. Happily, the sensation of flatness is often rather painlessly achieved—a by-product of Diebenkorn's willfully complaisant practice of letting whatever is happening on the canvas change his mind for him. The act of covering some large unsatisfactory area with a neutral tone, for instance, may gradually grow so interesting in its own right that it turns into a form of brushy elaboration; a stroke applied as the first step in the filling-in of an area may look so telling that it is simply left as it is. In the end, the buildup of spatial ambiguities is so dense that any three-dimensional reading of the piece is thoroughly frustrated; even passages as loose and runny as a distant sea squall may seem to loom upon the surface. Yet all the while he is balancing these things the painter must still attend to the reconciliation of vertical and horizontal elements. Diebenkorn's ever-shifting devices for interlocking his bars of color are in some respects oddly similar to the refinements of post-and-lintel construction in wood; the mystical quality that one may observe in the joinery of Norwegian stave churches or Japanese temples seems sometimes to haunt his grilles and trellises of color.

One morning soon after my arrival in Los Angeles, Diebenkorn called me up and invited me over to his studio, which is on Main Street. Main Street in Santa Monica is within easy walking distance of Ocean Front Walk in Venice, where I happened to be staying, but its tone is entirely different. Ocean Front Walk is America's answer to the Oriental bazaar: it teems with freckled Janissaries, Sikhs in sneakers, roller-skating Zouaves. Main Street, by contrast, is all chic bistros and boutiques; amid this trendy efflorescence, Diebenkorn's studio occupies the top floor of a smallish cubical building, which was constructed for him thirteen years ago. A design firm rents space on the bottom floor, where the artist also has a storage room with a rack for his paintings. (A former Main Street studio, where he began the "Ocean Park" series, later became Arnold Schwarzenegger's office-cum-gym.)

"This place has not been swept once," he proudly told me as he showed me in. I believed him. The floor was an earthquake landscape of bottles and tools and interesting scraps of colored paper; patches of dried cobalt blue—or derivatives thereof—gleamed everywhere on rags and jars and tubes, as if the sky had shattered and fallen in through the roof. The studio has only one row of conventional windows—they look out over Main Street from the building's east wall—but a north clerestory lifted across the middle of the ceiling lets in a lot of good, even sky light. Diebenkorn paints facing the south wall, in a spot that I soon began to think of as his "battle station," and all the remaining wall space is crowded with works on paper.

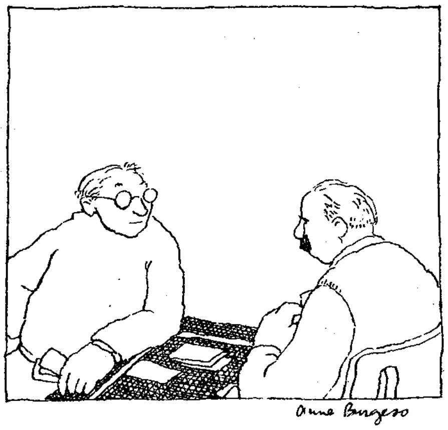
"There's no intended correspondence between any of these pictures tacked up on the wall," he told me. "They just landed there." I was surprised to find among them two representational drawings—impressive townscapes—and also a self-portrait sketch. "I did those long after I'd torn up my representational credentials," he said. "I have acres of self-portrait drawings. Representation is so rich that I'm sometimes struck by the relative paucity of elements in my abstract work. Yet something in the abstract department compels me more." Of dozens of small abstractions on the walls—most of them variations on the theme of the irregular grid—very few were finished; in fact, Diebenkorn was trying to polish one off when I visited him. A hard day's work for him may consist very largely of a series of concerted gazes; when he wants to take stock of his work, or rest his bad back, he sits in the middle of the room, in an armchair that he bought off the sidewalk from a junk dealer. The chair turned out to be too low for his long legs, so he mounted it on four wooden blocks—with barbaric-looking results.

"My first take when I come into the studio in the morning is important to me," he said. "My first take on this one here, for example, is pretty good; that one there is pretty pathetic, but I *like* it for being pathetic. I guess the first innocent look in the morning isn't all that innocent—it's designed to cheer me up. Sometimes I come in and I start staring at something, not moving much, and I sit here so long that I wonder why I came in at all. I say to myself, 'Why don't you just go home, Dick? You certainly don't have any business here.' But after a while I usually do get started, and I can wind up staying late at the end, just staring at what I've done. Part of the value of the first morning look is that it's fairly detached, even if it isn't entirely innocent, but part of the value of the end-of-the-day look is that I'm so deeply involved in the painting. I should add that if I come in in the morning and decide to take one down and make some changes on it, these are changes that I visualize right away, in a moment of fresh insight. Today, for instance, that tawny, beachlike collage over there is looking pretty dumb to me. Only now, suddenly, do I see that it needs some sort of cataclysm."

And what was it like to start out on a painting?

"Well, I begin with a congenial format, not an idea," said Diebenkorn. "I never feel like doing a great big canvas—though once I get started a lot of worthwhile experience usually comes off one. When I was young, I used to dream these wonderful images in that strange, suspended state between wakefulness and sleep. In my mind's eye, these images looked like completed paintings, with all their incidentals, but when I awoke and started questioning what was really there I realized that they were dream images—that they were not paintable. In time, too, I began to mistrust my great enthusiasms; I used to run to the studio with some visual idea, but when I tried to give it form it would look banal and simpleminded. Still, I couldn't dismiss my enthusiasms altogether—they would at least nudge me into a current, a direction. Now that I'm older, I'm not exactly cynical, but I'm no longer so eager about my mental images, either. What matters is when things actually begin to jell on canvas—that's when the real interest begins."

Diebenkorn sat down in his barbaric armchair. "I don't want an obvious color mood in my paintings," he said. "I want something less immediate—another, subtler sort of mood, if you will. Around 1955, when my first abstract phase was hitting a climax, I discovered that I had a great love for Mozart's music. Now, which performers did I like so much? Alfred Brendel . . . Ralph Kirkpatrick?" He knit his brow. "I remember how much I loved the Seventeenth Concerto. I felt that there was a direct feed from the music I liked into my painting. I even tried to picture what music might look like if it were expressed visually—but, of course, I didn't succeed, since there's no direct parallel. Oh, this must sound so square!" He gave an exasperated sigh.



"One thing that I know has influenced me a lot is looking at landscape from the air," he resumed. "I was first struck by aerial views when I was flying back to California from Albuquerque in 1951. This was my first daytime civilian flight. The airplane was a prop plane, and it flew very low by today's standards. The pilot actually dipped down into the Grand Canyon so we could get a look at the scenery—and this was during a scheduled flight of a national airline! I guess it was the combination of desert and agriculture that really turned me on, because it had so many things I wanted in my painting. Of course, the earth's skin itself had 'presence'—I mean, it was all like a flat design—and everything was usually in the form of an irregular grid. A bit later, I started photographing through airplane windows, and actually got quite good results. Then, about 1970, the Department of the Interior set up a visual-documentation program for its water-reclamation projects, and I was invited to join it. The director of the program was John DeWitt, and he brought in artists from all over the country, many of them rather well known. There were about fifteen of these water-reclamation projects; each was assigned to an artist or two, and we were expected to come up with art work based on what we saw. A travelling show was launched at the end, in 1973, by the Smithsonian Institution. The project I was assigned to was the Salt River Canyon, in Arizona; we spent five days in a helicopter surveying it. In one place, we landed on the top of a towering pinnacle overlooking the river; the pinnacle actually had a surface of an acre and a half. I did some drawings—or, rather, paintings on paper—there; we were supposed to do documentary drawings, but mine came out as abstract interpretations. I think the many paths, or pathlike bands, in my paintings may have something to do with this experience, especially in that wherever there was agriculture going on you could see process—ghosts of former tilled fields, patches of land being eroded. I also saw large areas where the fields were all planted in the same way for the same crop yet showed unlimited visual variety. It boggled me! There was also circular farming: you could see clusters of concentric circles, made, I guess, by the combines, but they were cut in so many different ways that each was unique, surprising. Each was nuttier than the one before."

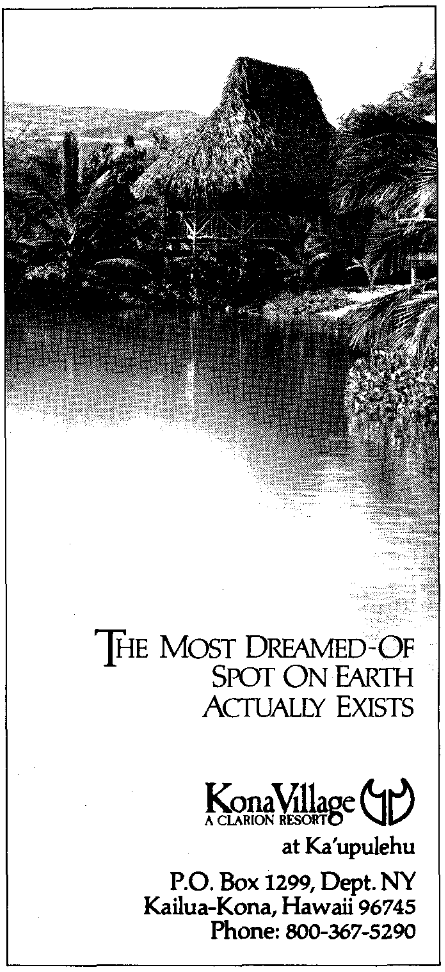
Diebenkorn paused, with the look of one rummaging through old memories. "Another thing that really affected me was a studio I once had in Berkeley," he said, at length. "It was a triangular room at the back of a tavern; I could open a door and look right down the bar at all the regulars. There was a lot of rather useless furniture built into the wall, and when I pulled it off you could see many different overlapping layers of house paint. The effect was fascinating. On the whole, this Santa Monica studio has worked out pretty well for me, but sometimes I feel I'd prefer to get back to a situation where my studio is in or right next to my home. In Berkeley, I had another studio that *was* at home, and I remember how I used to stand there with my coffee in the early morning. I'd look out the window at all the people with newspapers in their hands waiting for the bus—waiting to go to some important place—while I just hung around. But actually I wouldn't mind that now. I wouldn't mind being able to get up and put in a couple of hours of painting while I was still in my pajamas."

BEFORE long, I slipped into a rhythmic routine of alternating visits to Diebenkorn's Ocean Park studio and to his home in the canyon. On one of my visits to his house, I asked him how he'd got started as an artist.

"As a kid, age four or five, I was fascinated by trains, and I used to draw them—locomotives—on my father's shirt cardboards, on the nice, white side," he told me. "When I was older, about eleven to fourteen, I liked to illustrate themes. I liked N. C. Wyeth's illustrations for Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Black Arrow.' They're really good, I think. The other person was Howard Pyle; I still have some of his books. My father, who was a San Francisco businessman, very upper bourgeois, liked art but wanted me to be a professional man. It was our cook who gave me art materials—and my parents liked that, in the early years, because it kept me out of their hair. With these materials I drew adventure pictures, with lots of arrows flying, and mayhem. But the person who really encouraged me a lot was my grandmother, my mother's mother—Florence McCarthy Stephens was her name. She was one of these all-around women who are so admired today. She was a painter and a poet and a lawyer and had a radio program in San Francisco, reviewing books. During the First World War, she defended German-Americans who had their windows broken, and so forth, though she herself was Irish. It affronted her sense of justice. She appreciated my interest in Romantic literature—she read to me, and gave me a collection of books at just the right time for me to enjoy them. She read me Malory's "Le Morte d'Arthur" and made it understandable. She had been brought over from Dublin as a little girl around 1871. Later, she came to San Francisco and lived on Telegraph Hill, where she met my grandfather. His father was born in upstate New York but moved to Illinois before my grandfather was born, and then they took the stage, in the late eighteen-sixties—to even *think* of riding those stagecoaches through Indian country! Well, my grandfather's brother opened the first bookstore in San Diego, from which he became rich. Now, *he* was the kind of guy you might boo in a melodrama. He owned a lot of real estate, foreclosed on people, and rode around in a limo. He blew up at me once when I ran one of my toy limos over the fender of his big one."

Diebenkorn's formal art training started in 1940, when he entered Stanford, and ended in 1951, with his attainment of an M.A. in Fine Arts from the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque. He gradually matured as an artist under the influence of several talented teachers he was fortunate enough to study with or, later, to work alongside. The first of these was Daniel Mendelowitz, who taught at Stanford; Mendelowitz was known chiefly for his fine traditional watercolors. "In my third year there, I had about an hour alone with him every week, and that was quite stimulating," Diebenkorn said. "He influenced me a lot, and also let me use his studio in the afternoons. Otherwise, I was on my own. I used to drive around, full of enthusiasm, looking for landscapes or cityscapes to paint."

That year, Diebenkorn married Phyllis Gilman, a fellow-student at Stanford and the daughter of a prominent Los Angeles lawyer. By this time, the United States had entered the Second World War, and soon Diebenkorn found himself in the uniform of the Marine Corps. "My join-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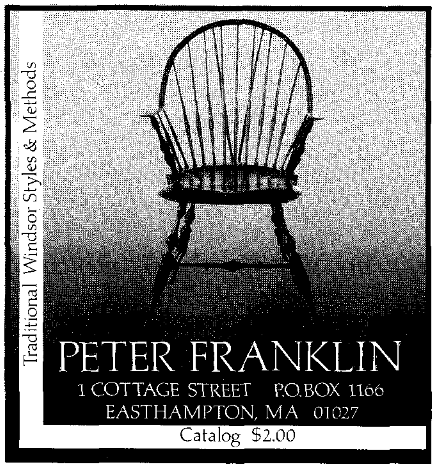
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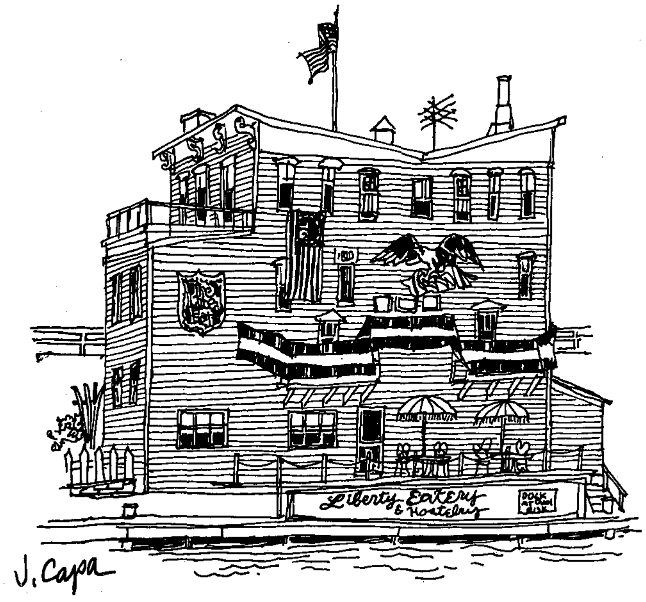
ing up had nothing to do with any romantic attraction," he told me. "It was merely that they'd promised to see me through college." As a cadet in the Marines' V-12 Training Program, he was sent for a semester to Berkeley (then known as Cal or U.C.), where he managed to fit in some art courses. Worth Ryder, Eugen Neuhaus, and Erle Loran taught there. Loran's teaching is still remembered by many American artists: in 1943, he published a textbook that came to be widely used; titled "Cézanne's Composition," it was crammed with diagrams and photos and elaborate explications. "If Mendelowitz had been rather undemanding, Loran turned out to be highly analytical," Diebenkorn said. "He was a bit *too* analytical for me. But that book of his on Cézanne probably does have a lot to offer."

In the early forties, the Berkeley art faculty hadn't yet fully recovered from two visits made in the previous decade by the Bavarian painter Hans Hofmann. Hofmann must have seemed half mythical: a living, breathing European modernist who knew Munich and Paris and many of the most vital figures in contemporary art. Already over fifty, he was a warm, fatherly man who championed modernism with evangelical fervor. Despite some intensive tutoring, Hofmann's English, liberally sprinkled with "*nicht wahr*"s and Bavarian dialectal locutions, remained almost incomprehensible during both of his visits to the Bay Area; but his grunting pedagogy was effective all the same, and his ideas took root. "The Berkeley faculty had become sort of disciples of Hofmann," Diebenkorn recalled. "His ideas—like, you know, 'the picture plane'—influenced everyone's teaching. The instruction at Berkeley was really much more rigorous than at Stanford, with everything sort of lumped together—'you don't violate the picture plane,' 'push-pull,' 'lateral dynamics,' 'the opposition of forward and back'—all that sort of thing. Frankly, I thought it verged on being pedantic, though in those days I might have used another expression—'too intellectual'—because Dan Mendelowitz had insisted that art wasn't intellectual. Looking back, though, I feel I got a lot out of it. About Hofmann, I really don't know: I never met him, though I'm familiar with his work. When he knocks out a good one—about one in twenty—it's magnificent. A while back, I saw a picture of his in the Metropolitan, about eight feet tall, with a churning, painty background out of which big squares emerge, and there's one little corner area—you could put your hand over it—that concedes the viewer a peek at the amorphousness beneath. Just a little peek—that idea really interests me. His other paintings usually have much more amorphousness; they fill me in about process—about how they were made—while this one does it only a tiny bit, at the end."

The gospel of the burly Bavarian must have affected Diebenkorn in many subtle ways. Little interested in symbolism or thematic content, Hofmann conceived of composition as a contest of forces: if volume was to be banned from abstract painting, then the drama it imparted would have to be replaced by something else. That something, he thought, was the tension between those devices which suggest an advancing presence toward the spectator (such as bright, warm color), and those which suggest recession (such as airy, cool color). This notion of balancing abstract forms on a flat frontal plane more or less equivalent to the plane of the canvas itself—the so-called picture plane—is the chief idea on which all of American modernist abstraction came to be based. Because the demands of this sort of composition can be met in so many different ways, Hofmann was convinced that abstract painting would remain a major type of formal invention. Diebenkorn's painting has never looked much like Hofmann's, but his sensitive treatment of edges does, on occasion, conjure Hofmann's ghost. More important, Diebenkorn would come in time to see the *act* of painting much as Hofmann saw it: as a physical struggle a little like the building of an eccentrically designed frame house, with all its inevitable hours of puzzlement and frustration.

The expanding war effort soon claimed most of Diebenkorn's time. After Berkeley came boot camp at Parris Island, more Marine training in North Carolina, then Officer Candidate School at Quantico, Virginia. On furloughs to Washington, Diebenkorn regularly went to see Matisse's painting "The Studio, Quai St. Michel," at the Phillips Collection. It seems to have afforded a momentous revelation. With its brusquely indicated grid of black lines, its sketchy "attack," and the undisguised ruthlessness of its author's struggle for the right strange clang of color tones, this great picture pointed the young Californian's way toward the development of his own individuality.

Posted to Hawaii as an animator in the Marine Corps' photographic section, Diebenkorn awaited with anguish the invasion of Japan. "They had decided to parachute some artists in before the assault," he told me. "I suppose the aim was to get some drawings of the terrain—just the sort of idea you'd expect the military to come up with. I was dreading and dreading it. There was one sergeant who really had it in for me. He used to glare at me and say, 'You'll be in the first wave, boy!' " But the invasion never took place, and Diebenkorn never saw front-line service.



After V-J Day and demobilization, Diebenkorn made the fateful decision to become a painter, and enrolled at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute). At C.S.F.A., as it was known, he was awarded an important grant, which enabled him and Phyllis to spend most of the 1946-47 academic year in Woodstock, New York, and thus to visit New York City's museums and galleries pretty much whenever they chose. Upon returning to C.S.F.A., now as a member of its teaching staff, Diebenkorn discovered that the painter Clyfford Still had also joined the faculty. Then in his early forties, Still was well on his way to becoming one of the major figures in American Abstract Expressionism. He was already known for a manner that, in its conceitedness and blunt American nativism, perhaps owed something to the examples of Ernest Hemingway and Frank Lloyd Wright. Still remained at C.S.F.A. for four years, a period during which his painting matured from a hermetic brand of symbolism into the color abstractions for which he is remembered today. Born in North Dakota, he fancied himself something of a prairie medicine man, and he tried, with occasional success, to charge his color fields with a sense of holiness and dread. This shaman pose both awed and irritated the young Diebenkorn. Though Still showed what a frankly American sensibility might make of European modernism, he was doing so, in the Californian's view, with "paranoid pomposity."

One evening in Santa Monica Canyon, over a couple of drinks, Diebenkorn and I fell to talking about Clyfford Still. "He was revered like a god," Diebenkorn said. "I remember that he had a tiny studio—it wasn't the size of this living room—in the basement of the school. One day, he invited me down there. I'd learned to say nothing to Clyfford when I was looking at his paintings, and this time, too, I just looked, with interest but without venturing to speak. A few days later, Clyfford came up to me in a hallway and said, 'I'd like to see what you're working on.' Phyllis and I were living in Sausalito then—it wasn't the self-conscious community it is today—and we invited Clyfford over for lunch. When he arrived, we chatted a bit, and then I took him upstairs to my studio and showed him a number of my paintings. This time, *he* said nothing. Then we went downstairs again, into the dining or living room—they were one, actually—and sat there waiting to eat. Phyllis was already a very good cook, and all these tempting lunch aromas were wafting in. At this point, Clyfford caught sight of a painting of mine that was leaning against a wall, and he said, 'I like that.' Of course, I felt embarrassed by this compliment and thought I had to chop it down. I thanked him, but I added that I wasn't sure the color really worked. Unfortunately, this wasn't the sort of thing you could say to Clyfford Still. What was this about color *working*? That sort of talk was for pedants and old-fashioned art teachers. Clyfford didn't believe in craftsmanship—only in the emotional impact of the entire image. He got up, put on his coat, and, without saying a word, walked out."

By this point in his narrative, Diebenkorn was chomping on the ice from his drink. "Much later," he pursued, cracking a cube between his teeth, "when Phyllis and I were vacationing in Ensenada, we discovered that Clyfford and the school's director, Douglas MacAgy, were both staying at our hotel, an extravagant, gorgeous place—the Riviera del Pacífico, I think it was called. It was built for gambling, but it had a forlorn air, because the Mexican government had closed the casino. One afternoon, Clyfford and Douglas and I decided to play catch—Clyfford and Douglas had baseball mitts with them—and I remember that I started throwing fastballs to Clyfford. I used to pitch in junior high, so I could throw pretty fast fastballs, and I knew I was burning Clyfford's mitt. I kept on thinking, I really shouldn't be doing this, I really should cut this out. But I just went on burning his mitt."

DIEBENKORN and his wife spent a few months in New York in 1953. They had some notion of moving there permanently, but by this time there were two young children to support, and the city proved too expensive. This brief sojourn was uncomfortable but interesting. One of the more hospitable artists whom Diebenkorn met was Franz Kline, who had recently come into his own as a maker of bold black-and-white abstractions. Diebenkorn remembers vividly his amazement at the exceptionally wide-gauge model railway tracks looping about Kline's studio, though he can't recall how many cars there were, and he never saw them under steam.

"Kline also had a telephone book whose pages he used to rip out to wipe his brushes on," he said. "One day, I started flipping idly through this telephone book, and I discovered that there were interesting sketches all over its pages. Kline said, 'Take one, any one you want.' He was a marvellously friendly and relaxed person."

Diebenkorn's stay in New York was so brief that he had little opportunity to meet the other Abstract Expressionists. The one who most often possessed his thoughts was Willem de Kooning. Diebenkorn had become aware of de

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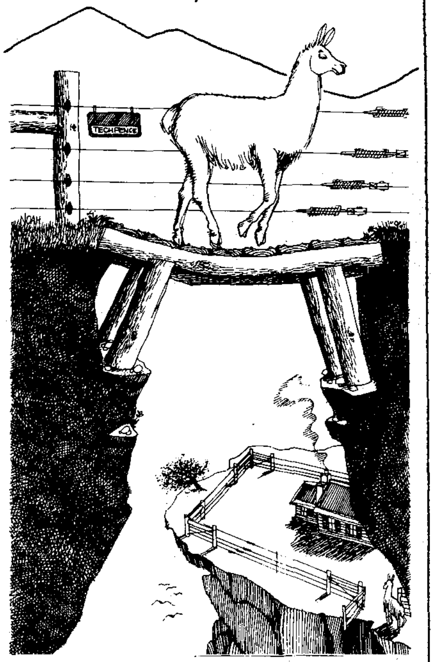

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Kooning in 1948, when he saw in the *Partisan Review* a series of black-and-white photographs of works in the painter's first one-man show. The paintings themselves were primarily black and white; executed mostly in house paint, they combined letter forms and biomorphic shapes in a virtuoso demonstration of several dissimilar yet perfectly interwoven methods of paint-handling. Diebenkorn is one of many art observers who feel that American painting hit an inventive peak in the nineteen-forties. “Those paintings of de Kooning's were his best, I think, though perhaps he has equalled them recently,” he told me. “They affected me enormously, yet I'm not aware of having seen any of them with my own eyes till several years later. I knew them strictly from photographs. The way he used that line—that was really *it* for me! I think such influence is natural when a young painter discovers an older one. I'm against the cult of originality, though I don't, of course, like copycats. But, after all, here's this tremendous experience, and what's the young painter supposed to do with it—stick it under the rug?”

By his late twenties, Diebenkorn was already producing remarkably mature and self-confident canvases. They were very large easel paintings composed of loose blocks of color and often traversed by a playful network of lines. The overlapping and interpenetration of the forms produced precisely that flattish, ambiguous “space,” or “spatiality,” that Diebenkorn, like the other Abstract Expressionists, regarded as the sine qua non of authentic modern painting. His manipulation of space owed much to certain New York artists—de Kooning in particular—and to some of his brilliant colleagues in the Bay Area, but it was still both personal and innovative. No other painter had his feeling for the uses of landscape as abstract structure, or for the fertile juxtaposition of elements that might seem to be naturally opposed. Many of his preferences in this period—preferences so deep they seem virtually somatic—have stayed with him over the years. One is a happy acceptance of the traditional means of painting: standard colors and brushes, rectangular primed canvases, ordinary drawing paper. Another is a fondness for simplicity of surface, for paint applied in an obvious, everyday way; he dislikes the impression that surface effects have been achieved in a mysterious, almost supernatural manner, a manner you'd be hard pressed to figure out no matter how long you studied the picture.

Diebenkorn's early achievement did not go unrecognized. He had well-received gallery shows in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York; in 1954, the San Francisco Museum of Art (now the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) gave him and two other local artists an exhibition. In light of this success, his switch to figuration in the summer of the following year came as stunning news to his growing audience. Yet Diebenkorn had in fact been preceded in this by two Bay Area colleagues, David Park and Elmer Bischoff. Park, who was about ten years older than Diebenkorn, returned to figuration in 1950, and he came to conduct a lively exchange of ideas with the younger artist. Diebenkorn still speaks of him in slightly elegiac tones of affection and respect. In his painting rack he keeps a small canvas by Park of a studio sink (a “studio corner” subject such as Diebenkorn himself later handled with aplomb); the wonderful sink has such an air of having been momentarily, nonchalantly put down that one can hardly believe that it was *intentionally* painted at all. It is as if a dirty sink were to appear, by some statistical freak, in the tinted shards of a kaleidoscope. In point of fact, however, the image sits on an accumulation of paint layers so heavy and clotted as to suggest a petrified cowpat. “We used to call this sort of surface his *merde*,” Diebenkorn said, with a chuckle. Park, in piling up his paint, was never afraid to disappear for days on end into a sow's ear in search of a silk purse, and this proved a useful lesson to a natural “digger” like Diebenkorn. Yet there was a notable difference in the way the two men “dug.” On the whole, Park knew what he wanted, and reworked his pictures until he had captured what was in his mind's eye; his best paintings have a truly visionary quality. Diebenkorn, more receptive to the changing image before him, repainted his canvases partly to see what would turn up as he felt his way forward.

As a student, Diebenkorn had drawn and painted from observation, but his switch to a broadly realistic manner was in no sense a switch *back*. I've seen two of his student drawings: one, which hangs in his dining room, of his Marine tunic and another, which he pulled out of a storage rack in his studio, of his father. Though they show a bit of the novice's uncertainty, they are still very expressive. Little is yielded to convention or mere imitation; every line bespeaks a soft attentiveness. The studied profile of his father's massive head (“A daunting authority figure, wouldn't you say?”) seems to represent a sort of reverse Galatea—a man turning into a statue of himself. This careful, plotted look did not reappear in Diebenkorn's drawings and paintings of the late fifties. Now he rough-hewed his compositions out of sheer color, letting cut-ins and scumbles and wet-in-wet passages make the structure, letting the paint itself do much of the work. This handling helped give the paintings what Diebenkorn calls presence—the sense of nearness and frontality which comes from frank paint patches riding bluntly upon the weave. Depending on how the viewer focussed his eyes, these images could at any moment dematerialize into abstract compositions spinning across the picture plane. The artist was seeking angular armatures and a fairly saturated—often warm or sunny—color balance. Shrewdly, he refrained from developing small focal areas where these would tend to occur in traditional painting: people's heads were often just a few notes of color. The viewer got involved with these canvases as totalities, as fields of emotional experience, or not at all.

In retrospect, one can see that Diebenkorn's turnabout was part of a general postwar revival of representation—in Paris he had been preceded by Giacometti and Hélion; in New York by de Kooning and Fairfield Porter—but he pursued his new interest in a way that owed little to any of them. What these other artists shared was a fascination with specific subjects, especially the human body; Diebenkorn put his motifs to uses that remained substantially abstract. It was as if he simply needed to absorb more of the visible world before returning to abstraction, as if he were insisting that in this matter of abstraction versus representation there was no real embarrassment of choice; perhaps, indeed, it was only by eating one's cake that one *could* have it, too.

Diebenkorn's preference for irregular grids came to the fore in this period. The orthogonals of rooms and terraces and low California townscapes dominated many of his images. Usually, one or more sophisticated devices (mostly of French provenance, though more brashly stated than they had been in French painting) returned the whole composition to the picture plane. The horizon line, for example, would lie unexpectedly high upon the canvas, or near things would lie tangential to far things, hoodwinking the eye. If a part of the image started to look good without describing anything recognizable, Diebenkorn would often leave it as it was. Details and textures, never solicitously rendered, were often captured all the same; Diebenkorn's breezy way with paint, in which glazes and scumbles and spotty overpaintings were enlisted without apology, could coincidentally suggest the physical feel of West Coast suburbia.

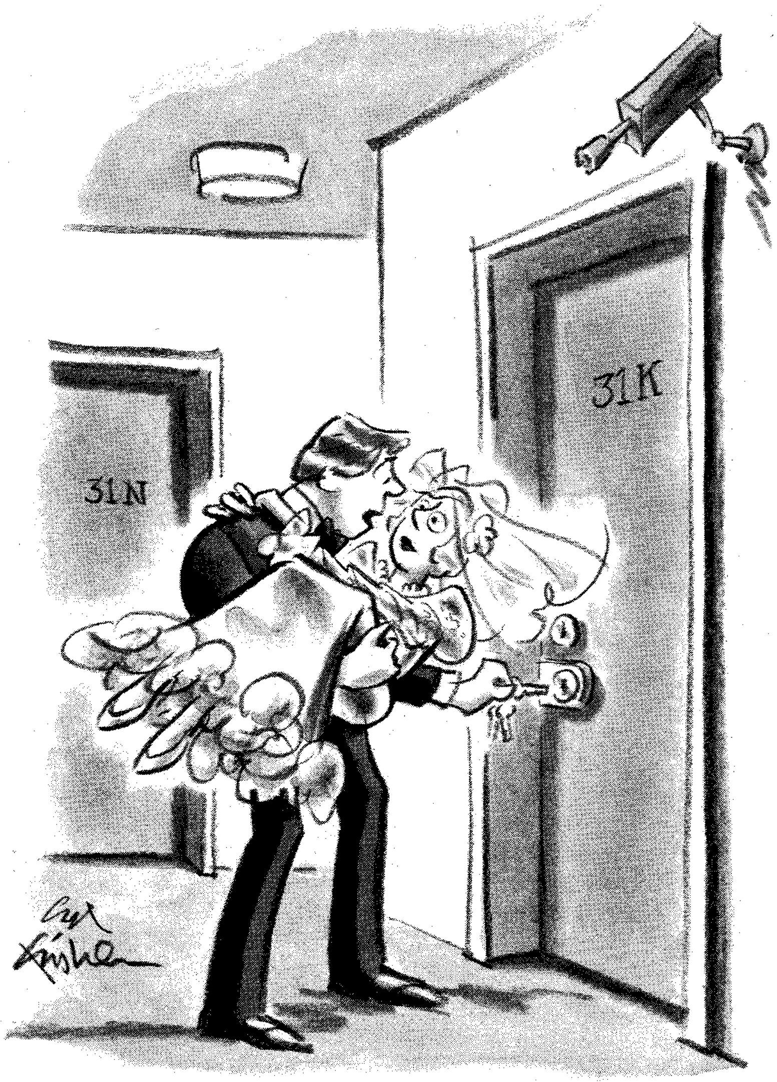
By the early sixties, Diebenkorn had shown his representational paintings several times in both California and New York. Painters and critics received them warmly, on the whole. In a piece on contemporary figuration, Fairfield Porter applauded Diebenkorn for sticking to the "where" and avoiding the "what" of painting—that is, for concentrating on color composition, while eschewing the chic existential "angst" with which so many painters were mucking up their images. It was one of Porter's critical rules of thumb that every realistic image must be judged as an abstract composition and, conversely, that every abstraction must be judged for what it says about the world. Although he never discussed Diebenkorn in this context, many of the Californian's "realistic" pictures of the time work best precisely as abstractions; through representation he had gained access to a whole repertory of musically pleasing shapes and rhythms that might well have looked odd in a thoroughly abstract framework.

Not everyone was happy with Diebenkorn's blend of representation and abstract design, however. An objection was raised by Hilton Kramer, then a contributing editor at *Arts Magazine*. In a piece in the December, 1963, issue he wrote that Diebenkorn's out-and-out abstractions continued to strike him as "the more authentic" realization of the artist's gifts: "Whenever he has sought to effect a greater congruence between realistic observation and pictorial design, the result is either bland or brilliantly old-fashioned." Diebenkorn's position, Kramer thought, was equivocal. To progress in realism, he would have to mortgage himself to the past; to advance in broad design, he would have to forfeit his existential involvement with his subject.

Perhaps Kramer's piece was prophetic, for within four years of its publication Diebenkorn had abandoned representation and returned to abstraction. There was a certain irony to this second turnabout. Not only did his final depictive works surpass any that he had previously executed but they managed, in my opinion, to eliminate whatever "incongruence" may have existed between the poetic specificity of subject matter and the requirements of abstract organization. The late "Cityscape #1" is both a flawless piece of abstract designing and a perfect evocation of a certain sort of American place. To promenade your eye along the edges of the shadows in this painting is to gain intuitive knowledge of an entire world.

At one point in our conversations, I remarked to Diebenkorn that, much as I liked his "Ocean Park" abstractions, I had long been rather regretful that he hadn't done another year or two's worth of cityscapes and interiors. He gave me a dry, impatient look. "I guess I have to insist that abstract spatial structure is absolutely primary to me," he said. "When I find something wrong in a piece, it's usually structure or 'spatiality' that I'm talking about. Content should follow automatically from these things. Remember those Rajput miniatures of mine? Well, neither of us is much interested in the action, are we? We don't really care what all those little figures are up to. But does that mean that the artists weren't involved in their subject matter? Obviously not. I would stress the structural, spatial, and coloristic attractions of these miniatures. I guess I simply have a very broad conception of what makes subject matter interesting."

IN 1966, the University of California at Los Angeles offered Diebenkorn a full professorship in its Art Department. He accepted (he would hold the position until



"I can carry you across the threshold, and I can disarm the alarm system, but I can't do both at once."

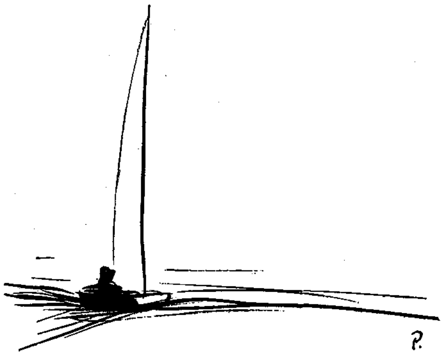
1973), and moved with his family from Berkeley to Santa Monica. Soon hard at work in a windowless temporary studio, he discovered that his painting was flattening out. Within a few months, it had gone abstract; the "Ocean Park" series was launched. "Even though my decision seemed sudden, I knew better," he commented in the catalog for a 1969 exhibition of works from the series, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. "By the end of the first week, it was clear that I was engaged in the same activity as always, the same searchings for subject, the intense boredom, deceits, and flurries of hope and excitement. . . . It's been a great release for me to be able to follow the painting in terms of just what I want for the painting. . . . [In my figurative work] I would start out with brave, bold color and a kind of spatiality that came through in terms of the color. Then I would find gradually I'd have to be knocking down this stuff that I liked in order to make it right with this figure, this environment, this representation. It was a kind of compromise—that on the one hand can be marvellous, and what painting seems all about, and on the other becomes inhibiting constraint."

In part because of the masses of pentimenti visible under Diebenkorn's thin veils of color, his new abstractions often looked like full-size studies for themselves. Such apparent approximativeness is rare in serious art of any sort; Marianne Moore all but defined good poetry when she wrote of words set down "in such a way as to admit of no interpretation of the accent but the one intended." However, Diebenkorn flatly denies that he is a visual poet or that he strives at all for the poetic in painting; and, in fact, his pictures attract us like certain unfinished, new-built houses that somehow seem complete as they are. As, in those unfinished houses, studs and lath and subflooring declare their presence with companionable nonchalance, so in the "Ocean Park" paintings a rugged substructure of lines and panels quietly insists on staying present to the viewer's mind. The delighting paradox is that painting of this transparently sketchy sort can also possess that sensuously satisfying tone which the cookbooks call "doneness."

We often think of creative people as units of stored energy, which, like batteries, require occasional recharging. No metaphor is less applicable to Diebenkorn's practice of his craft. For him, the friction and frustration of the try itself are what generate the energy necessary to solve a painting; and because this energy never expends itself in easy bravura it is proof against depletion. Flirtatiously courting calamity, Diebenkorn is more than half fond of muddles; the result is a species of ambivalent repainting which has mellowed into high style. To the degree that a work of art can be usefully envisioned as the painted replica of a temperament, Diebenkorn's temperament is most clearly perceived in his paintings' memorialization of their making. Each piece, in a way, is its autobiography.

The idea of incorporating flaws or hesitations into a finished work is not a new one in art; one finds it even in the Italian Renaissance. Yet this sort of procedure did not acquire a particular urgency until the modern period. In certain of Matisse's paintings (including "The Open Window" and "View of Notre-Dame," both in the Museum of Modern Art), all trace of conventional imagery has been forfeited to the imperatives of redrawing and repainting; what remains is two icons of sensibility itself, two records not of the perceived scenery but of the impossibility of its perception. I think it is fair to say that the "Ocean Park" series picks up where Matisse, in these two paintings, left off: "There is nothing that I cannot paint over," Diebenkorn told me with a ruthless grin. All the same, he is not, as he is often asserted to be, a perpetuator of Matisse's aesthetic. As Matisse grew older, he discovered a relative facility that piloted his pictures toward Cytherean realms of *luxe, calme, et volupté;* Diebenkorn's paintings, however upbeat, tend to reveal the fretful, disabused side of his being.

Diebenkorn's abstractions of the late sixties and early seventies were as popular among artists as his earlier work had been. Many painters appreciated his "feel" for their medium; they were diverted, too, by his way of turning Matisse to original account. Yet the "Ocean Park" paintings were viewed with considerable suspicion by a goodish segment of the New York art establishment. There was, first of all, a measure of that apprehension which the art world has always reserved for plainly superior painting—for painting that cannot be patronized. There was also an element of the typical New York haughtiness toward the supposedly "laid back" Californians (though Diebenkorn, who says, "After you, sir," as he opens the door for you, has an almost Old World formality about him). And, finally, there was the obvious fact that this stubborn Californian was out of step with the lions of New York abstraction: in the heyday of color-field painting, of acrylic stained into raw cotton duck, Diebenkorn persisted in using oils on normally primed canvas. During one visit to the city, at a loft party in SoHo, Diebenkorn was informed by a distinguished critic that if he wanted his art to achieve enduring quality he would have to switch to the staining method and move East, "to take your New York knocks." There is no reason to believe that this advice was ill-intentioned, but if Diebenkorn had accepted it he would have destroyed everything in his painting that made it unique, including both the Western sense of atmosphere and the felicitous maze of self-corrections.



What a great many mainstream paintings of the late sixties shared, and Diebenkorn's early "Ocean Park" pictures notably lacked, was a certain rational transparency. In all kinds of American painting of this period, forms could be observed to determine other forms: when you scrutinized one part of a painting, you could pretty well deduce what another part would be like. This way of working attracted those artists who craved a conscious, defensible rationale for what they put on canvas, and, in turn, their images flattered those viewers who wanted easy reasons for liking what they liked. Such paintings—and they are rather evenly distributed throughout the color-field, Pop, and minimalist "schools"—were indeed impressive in the clarity of their ambition; for those who felt (and perhaps still feel) that the capacity for seeing one's way confidently forward is the key ingredient of an evolving style, the best of them are masterpieces. But in the face of all this, Richard Diebenkorn remained a doubter; he was trying to cultivate in himself an absolute alertness to every inch of the evolving image. If anything, his paintings grew even more reticent and elusive than they had been, more reflective of their author's tendency to waver and to backtrack. They were paintings in which emotion had not been led by the halter but mounted and ridden—ridden like a tetchy, unpredictable mare.

UNTIL fourteen years ago, when he left the U.C.L.A. art faculty, Diebenkorn devoted a lot of his time to teaching. Unlike many painters, he liked it—he liked the students, the talk, the odd self-revelations. In the enthusiasm of instruction, he tended to abandon much of his reserve, and to say what he felt rather bluntly. "Then I'd find myself listening to myself," he told me, in a characteristically reflexive phrase, "and I'd notice that I was developing these fixations, these tics. And suddenly I'd realize that I was dwelling on problems that resembled my own problems in the studio at the moment."

One of Diebenkorn's student painters who went on to do something unique was Tony Berlant, another Santa Monica artist. Berlant makes large, brilliantly colored collages out of found sheet metal; breaking shape against shape and hue against hue, he winds up with pieces that strike a personal, even generously emotional note while retaining an industrial patina, an armored elegance. They have nothing in common with Richard Diebenkorn's paintings—not on the surface, at least—and you can clearly see that their spatial arrangements violate every one of Diebenkorn's private compositional imperatives. Yet the teacher is hugely proud of his pupil, whose work he follows with enjoyment. "I can honestly say that I've never produced a clone," the older man will tell you; he will even go on to deny that he *was* Berlant's teacher, in the sense of transmitting anything special to him.

Berlant himself disagrees. "The difference between having one contact like that and none," he said one morning in his studio, "makes all the difference in the world." Tony Berlant is in his late forties, a handsome, swarthy, heavyset fellow. He grew up in Los Angeles, and he knew about Diebenkorn for years before he met him as an undergraduate. The first serious painting course he ever took was with Diebenkorn. The teacher, he recalls, would insist on his students' finishing a large canvas in one day. First they'd warm up with a few hours of drawing, then they'd work on this "one-shot" for two hours, then they'd knock off for lunch, and after lunch they'd finish it.

"So there I was, in the first art class I'd ever taken, and he sharply criticized a painting I was working on," Berlant told me. "I said, 'But I think it's *interestingly* inept,' and he said, 'No, it's just inept.' But the next day he came up to me in the hall and said, 'I don't know why I said that, I really don't.' And I was appalled that this man, by whom I was so star-struck, was actually going around mulling over what he'd said to me. He was so generous with his time. He also very consciously insisted that one had to be true to one's impulses. He told me that if you tried to get rid of a mistake you might well wind up getting rid of the only thing that kept the painting from resembling your unconscious diagram of the officially 'right.' "

A smile grew slowly on Berlant's face. "I remember an incident from later on, when we were both teaching at U.C.L.A.," he said. "There were these twice-yearly faculty meetings to decide who would graduate, who would pass, and so on, and all the student painters had to bring in six works. The faculty were required to grade these things A to F, after arriving at a consensus. Of course, none of us could agree on anything. So there we were in this big room, arguing, confused, and Dick said, 'Look, every day we watch our government or some other government do something stupid, right? But the individual is not obliged to be stupid. *This* is stupid, and I'm not going to do it!' Afterward, in private, he did a storyboard of sketches showing a guy in various aggressively academic attitudes. Crouched down in the corner of the first frame was this little figure, and he rises higher and higher until, in the last frame, he bashes the academic guy. Well, that's Dick's attitude to that sort of nonsense. I've never heard him discuss any careerist stuff whatever. Nothing at all about galleries. When he goes around in a museum, he really stops and looks at every painting for a long time, with respect—even if it's by someone he's made very severe judgments about earlier. Still, he's remarkably loyal to the Abstract Expressionist ideas of his youth. I wonder how he feels about doing so well in New York—for a long time he was accepted there only grudgingly. You tend to forget that sort of treatment, until the people who dealt it out suddenly turn around and

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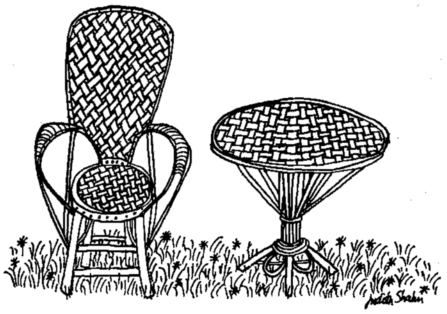
Berlant stopped to reflect for a moment. "I saw a lithograph of his once—no, actually it must have been a stone he was about to wipe out—where he'd written something on the bottom. It said 'Look, Dick, this is the bloody formula. You've got it now, right?' I realized that Dick must have grown impatient with himself for repeating what he thought was the same tired visual idea. But the hard fact is that after all this self-doubt he winds up making very authentic and pleasurable paintings. He's extremely self-critical, yet he knows his worth. I remember a time when he was actually voicing his doubt that he could make paintings at all, and I said to him, 'Okay, Dick, how many people in the world do you think paint as well as you do?' He thought for a long time, and then he just laughed."

OFTEN when Diebenkorn is in the studio talking about a work in progress, he'll say something like "There wants to be more red here" or "There wants to be more space." You could almost swear he was listening, like a magistrate or an arbitrator, to the painting's formal complaints; and if you ask him about a specific part of the piece he may indeed reply by presenting it as the outcome of lengthy litigation. He's a bit of a dialectician—in an intuitive, nonintellectual way. Once, I asked him if he felt, as I did, that many of his paintings have somewhere in them a small "key" element—this was my term—that activates the rest of the composition and also sums it up in some indefinable way. (Such, for me, is the orange smudge in the upper-right quadrant of the Whitney's "Ocean Park #125.")

"I see what you mean," he replied, "but I'd like to add that in my painting this special, or 'key,' element will usually embody a strong contradiction—a sudden, surprising contradiction. And I've liked things by other people for the same reason—because they broke their own rules. Sometimes, in my work, a bit of loose, throwaway painting just seems to cap the whole thing, but actually this marvellous loose bit—this 'key' element—was probably done early, when there was no risk in doing it. It's not the throwaway thing that's so special, you see, but, rather, the rest of the painting, which has to be painstakingly brought up to the same level. Any mark that finds itself on the surface of a painting and stays there soon becomes a determining part of it."

Diebenkorn scanned the rows of pictures on the walls. "I guess my work's always swinging back and forth between pared-down simplicity and an attempt to hold on to the incidentals," he said. Again, he seemed to be voicing his wariness of all "headlong" ways of working. "That one over there, for example, has been changing a lot recently. Lots of incidentals fell away only last week. And this can be bad, actually, because the picture can become too—oh, *singular*, really." Pressed as to what he meant by this, Diebenkorn explained that he was referring to a want of interesting elements; most of the time, his compositions require a plurality of forms. "Sometimes I paint things out and out, till I've painted down to an island, or down to nothing at all," he said. "I sense a little of this in Matisse's 'The Open Window'—this working so intently that everything disappears. When somehow I've lost the incidentals, it gets very hard for me. I can save a piece if this simplicity has enough sheer rightness, but if it doesn't, and I can't get the piece back from being too spare, too reductive, I lose it. Sometimes I used to just throw away the nearly painted-out ones. I cringe when I realize how much those things might mean to me now."

As my meetings with Diebenkorn progressed, they assumed a particular and, in hindsight, rather amusing form. Exceedingly wary of crisp formulations, he let few of mine or of his own pass unqualified, even wincing at the utterance, by either one of us, of certain single words. This habit, I noticed, was catching; his almost rueful scrupulousness had infected me. Lately, he had also taken to revising at the outset of each meeting whatever he'd said during the previous one. He was like a graphic designer correcting a design by tracing it, with the necessary changes, on an overlay of transparent paper—but there was the bewildering complication that since each new conversation was metaphorically equivalent to a new transparent overlay, the mental bundle of overlays I was carrying about in my head was threatening to become indecipherable. Trying gallantly to clarify himself, Diebenkorn ran the risk of self-encryption.



"I don't mean to be evasive when I say . . ." With this phrase, or one like it, he would broach almost every assertion, serving it up in the sauce of its attendant misgivings. Misgivings, disenchantments, indirections; residues of excitement or *ennui*; the feeling of being lost and liking it; sudden intimations that this beginning is also a perfect end; remaking the rules as one goes along; trembling on the verge of a revelation without the faintest desire to know what that revelation might be—these, it seemed, were the painful pleasures of Diebenkorn country. And if, having marked such proclivities, I could still refrain from exclaiming "Just like your painting!" that was only because I felt that so much intricate web-spinning should not be permitted to capture so common a fly.

Several hairs of Diebenkorn's brushy left eyebrow—dependents, no doubt, of some minuscule facial muscle—have an expression all their own. Lifting slightly whenever he ventures to say what he might want to amend forthwith, they suggest a little boy who is always afraid he's about to do something wrong. One may well wonder how such a cautious child could ever have grown into—of all things—an artist; the only plausible reply is that this cannot be the only child in Diebenkorn. At times, indeed, you may glimpse a rapscallion as pleased as Punch with his latest act of bravado ("I just went on burning his mitt"). How all the friskiness assorts with so much thoroughly perplexed introspection is a real mystery. But it is the necessary mystery in Diebenkorn's artistic personality, and the probable source of the drop of magic in his paintings.

ONE afternoon, Diebenkorn developed for me a few of his ideas about Matisse. It was right after lunch; we sat outdoors on his sunny back patio, while the two dogs dozed in a scrap of shade.

"When I was in Leningrad in 1964," he began, "I saw at the Hermitage Museum a Matisse picture that must have been—oh, seven feet wide. It's in Alfred H. Barr's Matisse book. He says it's an oil—he's wrong there, it's a gouache—but the important thing is the way the paint's piled up. Unfortunately, it was in pretty bad shape. The museum people took me into a lab where it was on an easel, and asked if I had any helpful suggestions, but as far as my amateur eye could see there wasn't a thing they could do with it—that was the way it had to stay. It was one of Matisse's Moroccan pictures, from around 1913, very 'decorative,' painted in flat, soft, matte colors. It was beautiful, but you felt that if you clapped your hands all the paint would fall off."

Leaving me alone with this alarming image, Diebenkorn vanished into the house, then reappeared with Barr's classic volume on Matisse and the huge, profusely illustrated monograph by Pierre Schneider.

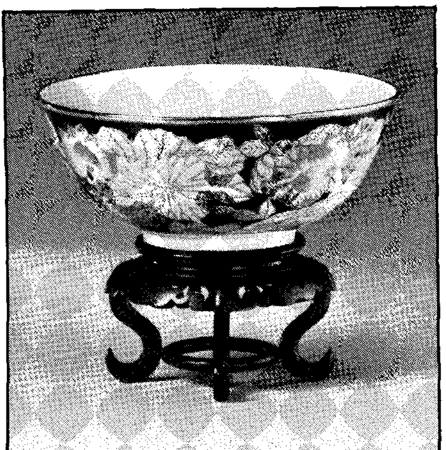
"Matisse had a great influence in this country," he said, "yet in the end he reached relatively few people. Now, look at this oblique view down over a piano. How could he have painted this stuff in 1900? It was hard enough for me to take similar liberties in 1950. Or 'The Blue Nude,' which should be somewhere here—yes, look how his physical attack seems almost bitter, yet there's this immense sensuousness. Together, they add up to a combination that was brand-new in the early part of the century." Diebenkorn explained how the Frenchman's paint-handling, which at some points had the quality of an expletive vented in frustration, ingeniously accommodated what might conventionally be seen as flaws. In early Matisse, two opposites, painting and painting out, were being fearlessly woven together.

"Here, in this picture of Greta Prozor, he scrapes down to the bone, plasters opaque paint right onto the scraped area. There are extreme differences of paint quality within the same depicted object, and it's so goddam original! Such painting was absolutely out of the question at that time. From these switches in handling, you can guess that nothing would get in his way. He just plowed the paint on. Matisse also had a lot to do with the achieving of spatiality in American painting. Now, here"—Diebenkorn had found a reproduction of "The Striped Dress"—"we have an example of what would later become one of the tried-and-true devices in American Abstract Expressionist painting: the positive area is the more elusive, with the surround or background being the more solid or advancing. Matisse was perhaps the first to cross up cues in this way." Diebenkorn pointed out some pronounced scoring with the shaft of the brush around the contours of forms, and showed how Matisse had continued this scoring into the bow of the dress, though now as a counterpoint against or through the forms.

"Matisse always surprises me, he's so rich," he went on. "One may expect, for example, a certain enhancing at a particular point, but then one looks and finds that it's all pretty drab there. He has this marvellous cool, he manages to resist all that jazz, yet he's as sumptuous a painter as there is. It's the restraint coupled with the sensuousness that's so utterly exceptional. It's a musical thing: this transition here, this color here, a wild surprise here that becomes, a little farther up—well, just a gentle part of the harmony."

The quality in Matisse that Diebenkorn seemed to find most impressive was his avoidance of the temptations of conventional procedure. Turning to a plate of the "Portrait of Madame Matisse," Diebenkorn drew my attention to two scrubby little areas hanging at her sides; there could be no doubt that very few picture dealers of the Belle Époque would have accepted them as legal tender for hands. "I have to think that these odd, unfinished-looking things in Matisse were done toward the beginning, and the painting finished around them. It seems that in time the painting—oh, *accepted* them. Clearly, the last thing that happened wasn't these crazy mixed-up hands, or the half-scraped-out head in 'Olga Merson,' for example; neither of these makes sense as a *final* gesture. Stuff like this is so outrageous, but there's a deeper rightness to it. Sometimes it happens to me in a painting that I just have one dumb little area to fix up, and I do it, and, boom, the painting's gone—for the time being, anyway. Matisse refrained from this sort of thing, and his very refraining became a kind of seeing."

To clinch his point, Diebenkorn turned to a color plate of "The Piano Lesson." In the lower-right quadrant of this picture he remarked a juncture where several different color bands casually abut on a chink of exposed canvas; he explained how, to his eye, this breezy little passage, which couldn't have made much of an impact on Matisse when it first appeared, had simply by virtue of being left alone become the "key" element of the picture—how it had allowed this part of



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the composition (and, to a degree, the whole painting) to breathe. If Matisse had added as little as one stroke here, the whole image might well have hardened into a Gordian knot of frustration.

As we continued leafing through the Matisse books, Diebenkorn's eye fell on a color plate of "Nasturtiums and 'The Dance' I." This is one of those Matisse pictures that virtually tell how they were made: by examining the paint-handling, one can easily retrace a succession of steps. "So here you see some of that process that people noticed in me later on," Diebenkorn said. "The background turned out blue, but you look at this torso and see that part of it's green, which was obviously the original background color, and there's even one breast from an earlier placement of the torso still clearly visible *outside* the figure." In this painting, the past had become almost physically a part of the present—a dreamlike sensation that evidently enchanted Diebenkorn.

He had a lot more to say about Matisse that afternoon, but shortly after I left him I realized that he'd said remarkably little about Matisse's color—the thing Matisse is most known for. Apparently, Diebenkorn didn't think very much about color as an entity in itself, and I began to wonder if Matisse had, either. If Matisse had used color primarily to produce a compelling decorative sense of the motif, Diebenkorn used it to produce spatial structure; good color, one might be led to suspect, was really—for these two painters, at least—a by-product of good seeing. And, indeed, there is something ingratiating and, finally, cloying in beautiful color used purely for its own sake. Just as the truly charitable person is supposed to be largely unaware of his charity—"goodness," as the saying goes, "is a state of unconsciousness"—so the painter with a genuine flair for color must perhaps remain something of a stranger to his own gift.

ONE morning when I arrived at Diebenkorn's studio, he came to greet me at the head of the stairs wearing an even more bemused look than usual.

"You realize, of course, that my letting you in here at all is totally opposed to my usual practice," he said glumly as I took off my sweater. "I mean, I hardly ever invite people to my studio. Most of what I've got here is pretty patchy, pretty embarrassing. I'm sure that if you could just wait a few weeks the whole situation would be eighty per cent better."

I kept silent; I could see that he was heading somewhere interesting.

"As long as you're here," he went on, "and you don't mind looking at these things, let's take a good long look. Pick anything, on any wall you like."

Obediently, I went over to the west wall and began to contemplate its two long tiers of pinned-up works on paper.

Diebenkorn stood beside me, screwing up his face. "I have this friend who visits me sometimes," he said, "and I know he thinks I'm a pretty good painter, and has an over-all respect for what I'm up to. So I asked him recently what he thought of these things, and he replied—looking at this one here—that the only part that mattered was the bit in the lower-right-hand corner, the bit that's sort of reminiscent of a still-life. Everything else was inessential, or didn't really belong. O.K. He may be right, he may be wrong, but the point is that I sometimes feel that I need someone to drop by and say, 'Come on, Dick, enough fussing—throw that one away.' "

Now I saw that Diebenkorn had been paying out a confidence, as one pays out a rope; it was up to me to catch the other end. What he was seeking, I felt, was not advice, exactly—I had neither the qualifications nor the impulse to offer that—but, rather, some reassurance that his activity was not hopelessly solipsistic; he needed, now and then, to see his work from an outsider's point of view, and so would readily borrow any pair of sympathetic eyes. The visitor's part was to provide (or withhold) such confirmation, and to do so while matching the questioner's subtle uncertainty with some corresponding tact of his own. For Diebenkorn had often made a virtue out of being of two minds about something; no prudent person would care

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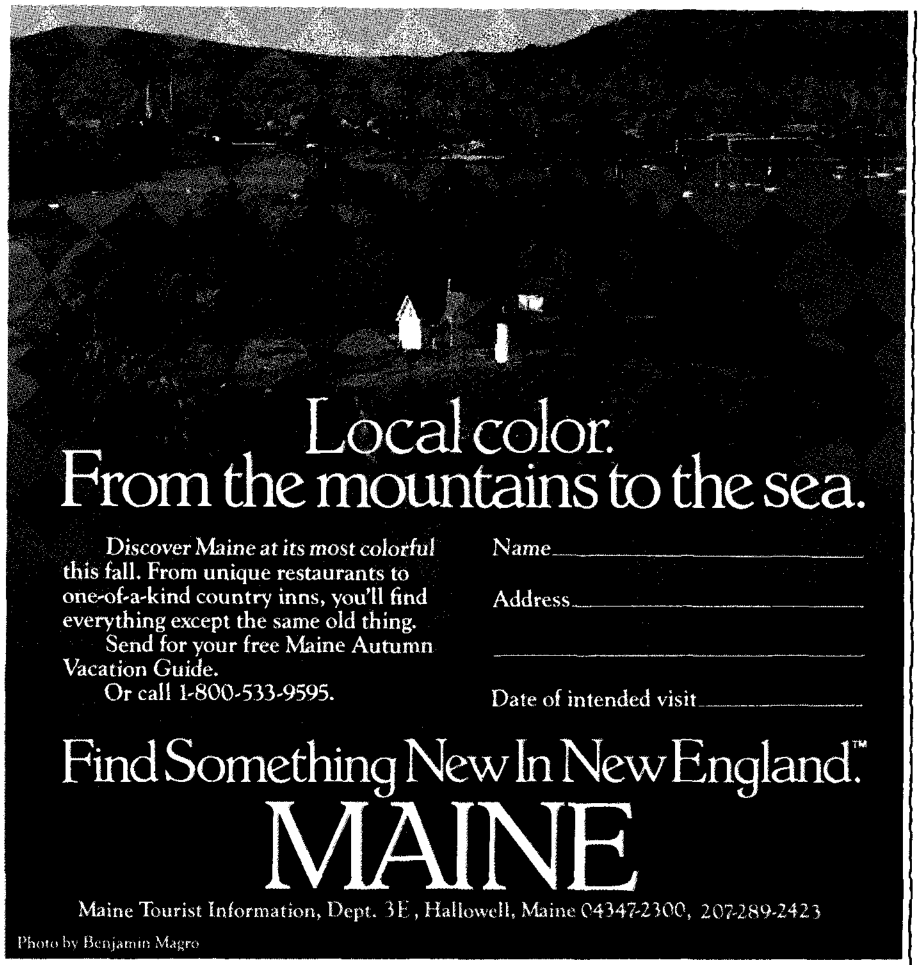
to press him to an aesthetic decision.

We had come to rest before an attractive acrylic on paper: zigzag through a stubbly gray field went a lattice of pinkish lines, which connected, like a transport network, a cluster of rosy splotches. From this maplike arrangement, which might have served as the board for some goofy game, one received an agreeable impression of being somewhere; yet I wasn't sure that so lyrical a locality was really where Diebenkorn wanted one to be. There are parts of his paintings where a decorative felicity runs to the simply gorgeous, but such lushness is commonly broken against harsher passages, which throw it into relief as something rare and fragmentary. Perhaps what the little painting needed, I said, was simply a sudden shift of gears.

"A shift of gears." Diebenkorn echoed the unadventurous suggestion. He bit his lip and rocked back and forth on his heels a few times. "That's it," he said after a while. "That's what this painting needs. A shift of gears!" Ready for action now, he strode over to a worktable and began squeezing blobs of color onto a tear-off palette. To give his enthusiasm a wider berth, I sidled along the wall to another painting. I studied it, then studied a few more. When, after a lapse of some minutes, I turned back to glance at him, he was standing at his battle station intently scrutinizing the lattice image, which he'd pinned up before him. He said, "Gee, I hope you can find something to look at for five or ten minutes while I fix this thing up. It's this part in the upper-left-hand corner that's bugging me now. It's too— I don't know, too dramatic or something." He unpinned the piece and laid it on the floor. As I moved down the wall to the next painting, I heard the swish-swish of brush against paper. The room momentarily darkened: a cloud shadow.

Many cloud shadows later, I finished scrutinizing that particular wall of paintings and turned to look at Diebenkorn. He was still in civvies, risking the lightning conversion of a pair of good pale-blue cotton trousers into a pair of "painting pants," and he was standing at an oblique angle to me, his feet planted far apart, and bending at the waist—just the way his doctor must have told him never to do, considering his history of back problems. I could hear his brush scrubbing the painting on the floor.

"I'm so sorry," he said. "What a way to treat a guest! Well, it looks like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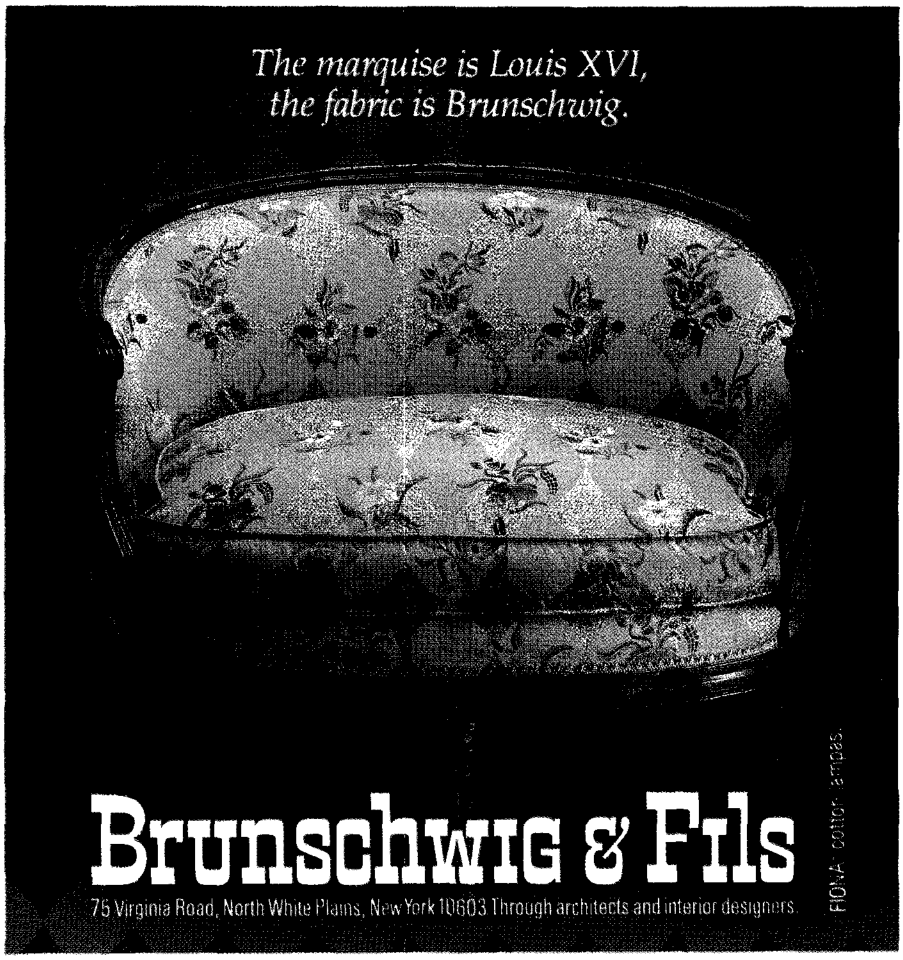
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I'm stuck now. I hope you don't mind if I just keep on working. What do you say to our meeting here tomorrow morning, about eleven o'clock?"

I agreed, and made ready to go. But as I reached out to pick up my sweater from the back of a chair something glittery caught my eye, the way a person's spectacles can, or a bright rivulet in a landscape. Half hidden under a pile of colored-paper scraps lay a little round mirror, about five inches across—a shaving or makeup mirror of the sort that usually has a magnifying mirror on the back. I held it up to my eye and examined, in reverse, the painting on the floor.

"Yes, I still use that from time to time," Diebenkorn said, with a wistful smile. "Years ago, I consulted the mirror constantly when I was painting. I thought I needed what it showed me. I thought, Oh, boy, what a marvellous tool for checking up on myself. By looking at a picture's mirror image, I could see it as something foreign, unfamiliar, and so address myself to its previously hidden flaws." He fell silent. "When I was a representational painter," he resumed, "I liked painting what I saw in ordinary wall mirrors, and it was the same with my students. I'd put a mirror in a setup on the model stand, and the really beautiful part of their paintings would always be in their handling of whatever image was held in the mirror."

I suggested that they probably felt, in their treatment of these mirror images, that they were painting not a throng of well-known objects, each clamoring to be given its descriptive due, but, rather, a sort of color event; for in the mirror things were strangely masked, and melted into each other without insisting on formal identification. In this looking-glass world, I went on—recalling my own experience as an art teacher—one's brushes were free to indulge their every wish. They were free of the straitlaced strictures of the ordinary world of the right way around.

"Ah, but you have to watch out for the mirror," Diebenkorn said. "This mirror thing is a whole puzzle in itself. I've been gazing at mirror images for years, you know, and, with time, I've become more skeptical. I've begun to see the mirror as something like—well, like a nervous habit. In fact, I could probably say that I'm free of the mirror now, or almost free of it."

After I left Los Angeles, I kept in touch with Diebenkorn by phone. When four months had gone by, I figured that most of the small works I'd seen in his studio would be finished; I was curious about how the piece with the pinkish lattice motif had worked out. I was sure he'd done more than simply "shift gears"—that idea had served only to budge him out of a quandary—but I wasn't prepared to have my question met with a question.

"What lattice motif?" he inquired, sounding utterly stumped. "Everything here has changed so much I'm afraid I can't remember it."

All the while, month after month, Diebenkorn's strange remark had been running through my head: "You have to watch out for the mirror." It had both the force of a real admonition and the portentousness of a warning uttered in a fairy tale. But how, exactly, should one take it? Was he referring to the fact that nature itself is seldom perfectly symmetrical—which explains why a friend's face may look unfamiliar when reflected in a mirror? Or did he have something deeper in mind? In everyday life, the mirror helps us to see ourselves objectively, but it can also reprove us and so hobble our spontaneity—hence our ambivalence toward it. This ambivalence, this tug-of-war, finds expression in almost everything that Diebenkorn says about his work. At times, of course, one is tempted to intervene in his inner struggle, to leap in on the side of spontaneity. Yet that, one must finally concede, would be altogether the wrong momentum with which to approach an artistic progression that has, for over forty years, been so much the reverse of headlong.

—Dan Hofstadter

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Picada—Chopped one person 8.00
—*Menu of a Colombian restaurant in Queens.*

No, thanks.

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SOCIAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*Pat Steger in the San Francisco Chronicle*]

Summer Reading: Gioia Diliberto's "Debutante: The Story of Brenda Frazier" has more than a little local interest in it, especially since Brenda's second husband, Robert Chatfield-Taylor, was previously married to Elinor Chatfield-Taylor. Robert and Elinor's daughter, Joan, is also in the book. Her husband, Philippe Henry de Tessan, is an owner of Forrest Jones shops, and Maggie Ames works for him at the Sacramento Street store.

Now that's interesting because Maggie's late sister-in-law, Lorraine, was married to Brenda's stepbrother, Jimmy Watriss, and it was Jimmy who introduced Brenda to Robert.

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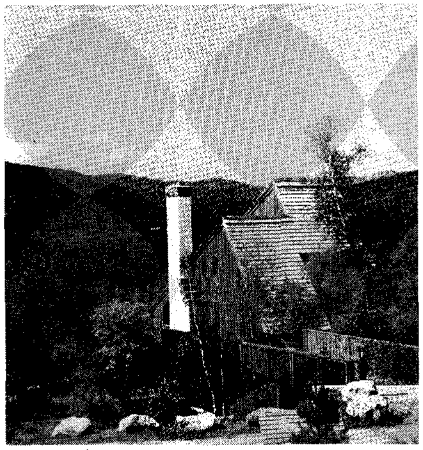

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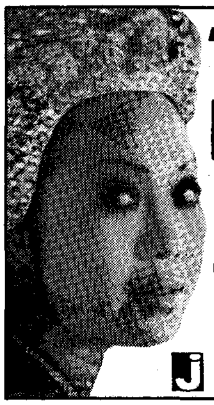

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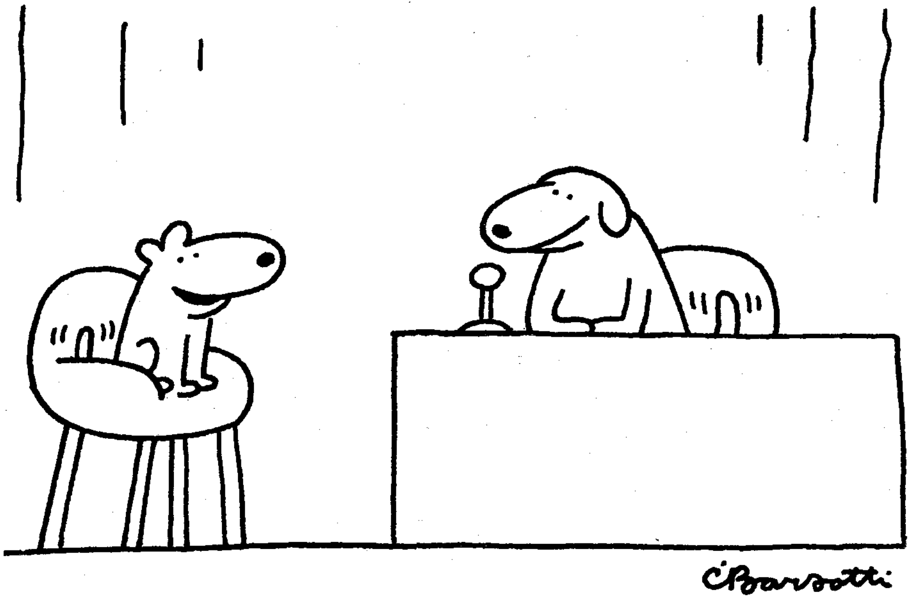
MY AND ED'S PEACE PROPOSALS

Ed and I each have come up with a proposed plan for the cessation of hostilities between the Reagan Administration and our household. Since our plans differ in certain minor respects (Ed taking a somewhat tougher line), we offer both versions, in the hope that they may at least stimulate the Administration to consider negotiations toward ending the past six and a half years of drawn-out mutual aggression and mistrust. This is not a ploy or a farce on our part. We are even putting all our personal problems on the back burner while we press these initiatives. We now task the Administration with showing how sincere *it* is by responding in a spirit of reconciliation and good faith.

My Plan	Ed's Plan
1. Immediate suspension of Elliott Abrams, who will then be reflagged as a Kuwaiti vessel.	1. Ed given a line-item veto on Presidential rhetoric.
2. Unconditional withdrawal of the Bork nomination; Bork allowed to head a Presidential commission on the colorization of film classics.	2. Immediate amnesty for Ed's mother, a political prisoner of right-wing mailing lists.
3. Trade and assistance: As soon as the first two conditions are met, we will give support to the Administration's economic goals by ceasing our costly flow of Mailgrams to the White House, thus freeing funds for disbursement to more productive sectors of the economy and enabling us to stop accepting aid from Ed's mother.	3. U.S. diplomatic relations with puppet regime of Pat Buchanan severed for an indefinite cooling-off period; in return, Ed will use all his influence to halt Latin-American incursions by Joan Didion.
4. National plebiscite on secular humanism, to be supervised by elected representatives from four regional productions of "La Cage aux Folles."	4. Arms reduction: Ronald Reagan to enter into a one-on-one dialogue with Peter Ueberroth to achieve a 60-day suspension of Mike Scott of the Houston Astros for pitching defaced baseballs. This is just to give Ed an added incentive to abide by the remainder of the plan.
5. Timetable for routine Rorschach and Stanford-Binet testing of President Reagan.	5. Timetable for the election of someone else as President by the end of 1988.

—Veronica Geng



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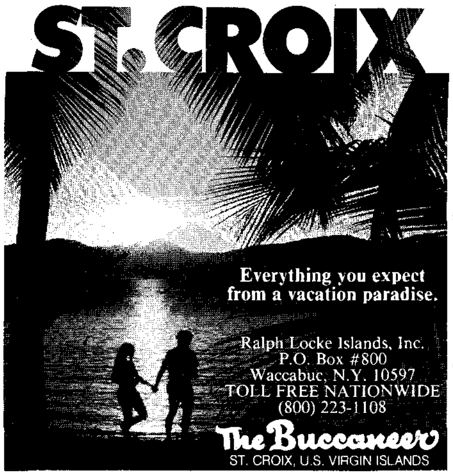

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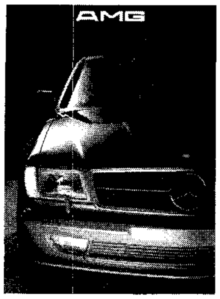

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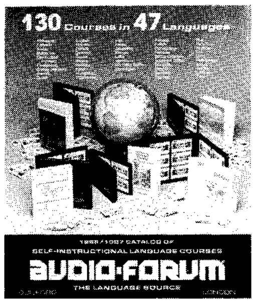
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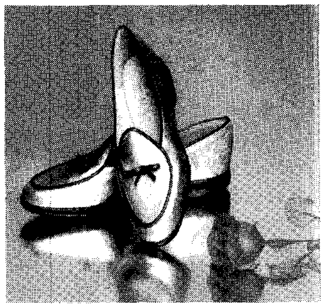

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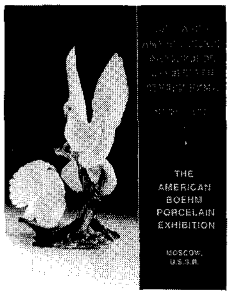

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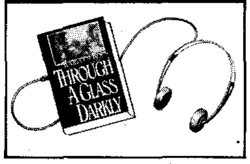

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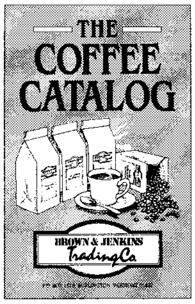

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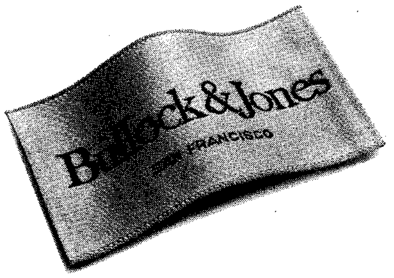

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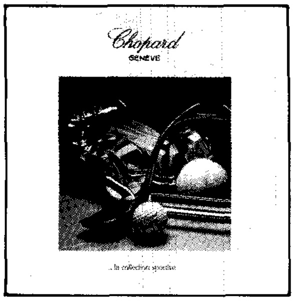
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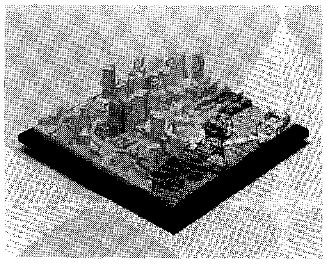

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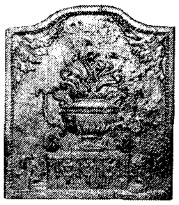

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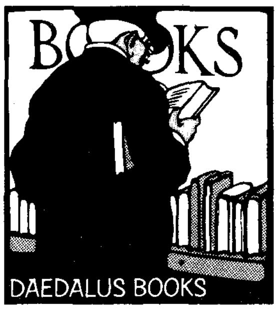

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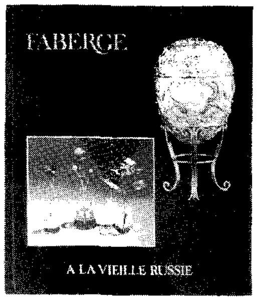
Express Music. Express Music is the first complete record store in a catalogue. Over 200 pages! Finally, quick home delivery of any music you want from the world's largest record, tape, and CD guide. Toll-free phone service too! Subscription includes 12 months of updates of latest releases and monthly specials. First issue includes $50.00 in discount coupons. One year, **$4.00** (refundable with first order).

56



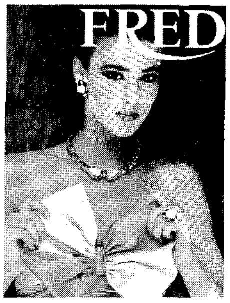
A La Vielle Russie. Snuffboxes, Fabergé, Antique Jewels, Russian Icons, and Objets d'Art. Russian and French Furniture and Decorations. (212) 752-1727. Award-winning illustrated catalogue of our 1983 Fabergé exhibition containing 188 color plates plus 36 in black and white. Virtually all of the 564 pieces are illustrated. **$38.00.**

57

FAO SCHWARZ
FIFTH AVENUE

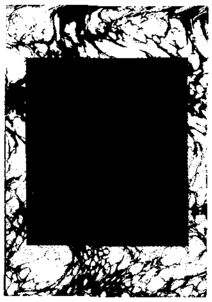
FAO Schwarz. Fantasy lives. FAO makes it so. The most extravagant, exuberant, joyful, and generous vision of holiday toy-giving ever assembled on 60 pages. Hand-wrought rarities. FAO signature superlatives. Things educational, international, exceptional. FAO is serious about play. Even the catalogue is an experience. Promise. **$5.00.**

58



Fred Joaillier. The stylish elegance of Fred Joaillier's jewelry collection is available in the U.S. at the following salons: on Fifth Avenue in New York City; the Galleria in Houston; the Galleria in Dallas; on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. This fashionable jeweller offers a full-color catalogue of their jewelry and watches, available for **$5.00.**

59



Frost Bros. The Gift of Style. A gathering of the most rare and unique gift ideas: fashions, fragrances, accessories, Gucci, Hermès, and accents for the home selected from around the world to make your 1987 Christmas one to remember. Shop by mail or phone. The Gift of Style, Frost Bros. Christmas Catalogue, **$2.00.**

60

garnet
hill

The Original Natural Fibers Catalog

Garnet Hill. Discover the luxury of pure, natural fibers in elegant cotton, linen, and damask bedding and bath items, exquisite lingerie and nightwear, handsome cotton and linen outerwear for men and women, and the finest selection of children's clothing anywhere. A world of pure comfort in luxurious basics from Garnet Hill. Two-year catalogue subscription, **$1.00.**

61

GEO F. TRUMPER

Perfumer

Established 1875

Geo F. Trumper. Geo F. Trumper, London's most famous perfumer, invites you to share in England's heritage through their historic range of beautifully packaged fragrances, colognes, balms, soaps, and shaving requisites—many prepared for the Royal Household, whose patronage they have enjoyed through five reigns. All available from this new illustrated catalogue. **$3.00.**

62

GRAND FINALE
SAVE 20%-70%

Grand Finale. Save 20%–70%. The Grand Finale catalogue is filled with savings on quality merchandise from Pierre Cardin, Martex, Wedgwood, Towle, and other famous names. You'll find quality home furnishings, fine china, designer clothing, luggage, imported linens, unique gifts, and exquisite jewelry, all at bargain prices. Satisfaction guaranteed. For a full year of catalogues, (U.S. addresses only), send **$2.00.**

63

FALL 1987

SELECTIONS

Plan for the holiday season by sending away for several of these outstanding catalogues. You'll discover page after page of innovative ideas that can truly make shopping an adventure. Imagine how you'll delight everyone on your gift-giving list, too!

GUMP'S
SINCE 1861
San Francisco's most extraordinary store!

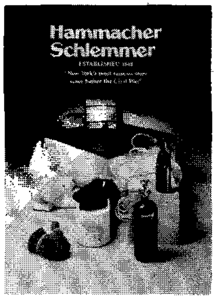
Gump's. Unsurpassed for gift-giving, Gump's has been called "the greatest store of its kind in the world." Send for the exclusive Gump's Gift Book and shop at home from a rare and distinctive gift collection—including Oriental objects, china, crystal, lamps, fashion, and jewelry. A one-year, 4-issue subscription is **$3.00.** (Outside the U.S. $15.00.)

64

The Source for Everything Jewish

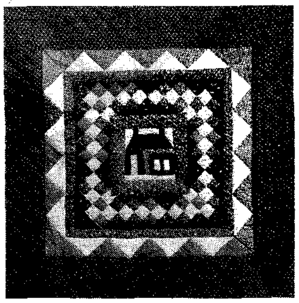
The Source for Everything Jewish. Jewish gifts by mail...Hamakor Judaica is the Source for Everything Jewish—a delightful diversity of decorator, collectible, everyday, and whimsical items. Catalogue includes ritual and festival products, limited-edition prints, and sculpture. Be nice to yourself, or find the ideal gift. For the year 5748 and special seasonal mailings. **$2.00.**

65



Hammacher Schlemmer. For 139 years, Hammacher Schlemmer has offered the best, the only, and the unexpected. Our latest catalogue features the best electric shaver, the only travel-size environmental sound machine, the genuine turkish towel and bathrobe, and hundreds of other things that can't be found elsewhere. A year of catalogues, **$2.00.**

66



◆ HAND MADE QUILTS ◆

Hand Made Quilts. Authentic Amish quilts from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Traditional patterns custom-made in your choice of colors and size. Or select from our collection of finished quilts. Beautiful full-color catalogue featuring pieced and appliquéd styles in wall hangings, and crib to king sizes. **$3.00.**

67

hanna Andersson

100% Cotton

Hanna Andersson. Hanna is the mother of two, and her 100% cotton clothing is designed for the way children live. Bright primary colors in solids and stripes plus soft quality cotton combined in sensible, comfortable designs available only through her full-color 40-page catalogue. **$1.00.**

68

THE HARRINGTON HAM COMPANY
Since 1873
IN THE GREEN MOUNTAINS OF VERMONT

The Harrington Ham Company. Famous for our exclusive "Maple Glazed" Party Hams, the Harrington Ham Company smokes all its fine meats the old-fashioned Vermont way, over fires of corncobs and maplewood. Our catalogue is a colorful showcase of smoked meats, cheeses, syrup, much more. Comes with a $10.00 certificate good toward first order. **$1.00.**

69

The HARVARD Shop

The Harvard Shop. Harvard gifts of distinction. The only store devoted exclusively to selling Harvard merchandise. Call or write for catalogue: 52 JFK Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 (617) 576-3818. **Free.**

70

since 1967
haverhills

Haverhills. Advanced products for a fuller life from Haverhills, offering a unique selection of more than 200 opticals, watches, clocks, automotive items, electronics, and many great accessories for home and office. Many of these exciting items are available with a "special deal"—buy two of the same item, and Haverhills will send you a third free with their compliments. **$2.00.**

71

Museum Crystal Hoya. The Museum you can buy from offers a magnificent catalogue presentation of art and functional crystal collections. Pieces priced from $40–$30,000. Hoya Crystal Gallery, 450 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022. **$6.00.**

72

Huntington
Clothiers & Shirtmakers

Huntington Clothiers. Featuring fine traditional dress shirts, tailored clothing, and sportswear, our seventy-two page catalogue offers quality traditional apparel at prices far below retail. As manufacturing merchants, we offer you great direct values with impeccable standards and conservative pricing. Your satisfaction guaranteed. Order toll-free 24 hours. 1-800-848-6203. Holiday catalogue, **Free.**

73

I. Magnin

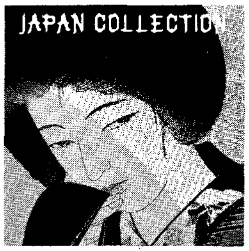
I. Magnin. The 1987 Christmas catalogue: a gathering of the most select gifts and great fashions, for women, men, and children, for yourself. More than 100 pages of imaginative ideas. Send **$5.00.**

74

JACQUES DARCEL
INTERNATIONAL CORP

Jacques Darcel International Corp. Now Jacques Darcel™ exclusive wigs and hairpieces are available by mail for your convenience. Select from a fascinating assortment of classic and innovative designs—styled to specification by our professional stylists. Limited edition full-color catalogue, **$2.00.**

75



The Japan Collection. A 48-page, full-color catalogue from the Ronin Gallery, which has the largest collection of fine Japanese art in the United States. Rare 17th to 20th-century woodblock prints, crafts, netsuke, pottery, posters, cards, books, and other unusual gift and decorating ideas from Japan. Visit us at 605 Madison Avenue, New York City 10022; (212) 688-0188. For a two-year subscription send **$5.00.**

76

JEWELRY DIRECT™

Jewelry Direct. Put the finishing touch on your wardrobe with jewelry designs completely in step with today's fashion scene. Classic cuff links, bracelets, and rings for him. Stunning bangles, pendants, and necklaces for her. All in 14K gold. Comes with a full guarantee. **$2.00.**

77

the
KNOWLEDGE
COLLECTION

The Knowledge Collection. The most extensive catalogue of educational and instructional videotapes, featuring over 6,000 entertaining and informative titles you can buy or rent by mail. You receive our 450-page catalogue plus quarterly newsletters and $10.00 in redeemable merchandise coupons—you save more than you spend! **$8.95.**

78

Korelia, INC.
FINE EEL SKIN IMPORTS

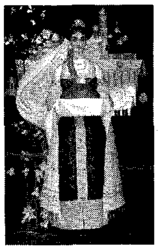
Korelia, Inc. Luxurious eelskin is now available directly from the importer at savings of 50% or more. Our full-color catalogue is filled with men's and women's eelskin accessories, all available in eleven beautiful colors. You'll also receive our special selections, including our holiday gift sets and the Executive Collection. **$2.00.**

79

LAURA ASHLEY
BY·POST
laura ashley

Laura Ashley By Post. Laura Ashley offers a delightful selection of fashions and home furnishings for the holiday season. We invite you to join our catalogue service. Subscribe now and enjoy our exciting Home Furnishings annual, a series of seasonal fashion catalogues and the festive Christmas Gift catalogue. One full year for **$5.00.**

80



Light Opera Gallery

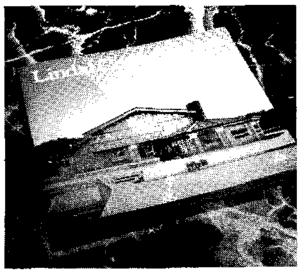
Light Opera Gallery. Our set of three catalogues features Russian lacquer boxes — the largest collection outside of Russia. The Kaleidoscope Booklet features 25 artists. The Gift Catalogue presents art glass, paperweights, and scrimshaw. **$2.00.**

81

The Lighter Side

The Lighter Side. "They who laugh, last!" Over 500 lighthearted surprises that lift the spirit and tickle the funnybone. Your gifts of wit, whimsy, merriment, and mirth will be long remembered. Things you never knew existed add glee and gaiety to your holiday shopping and giving. **$1.00.**

82



Lindal Cedar Homes. Contemporary ideas for kitchen, bath, and the entire cedar home, showcased in the new 1987 Lindal Cedar Homes Planbook. Get 200 pages of beautiful color photographs, 90 custom plans, design tips, and planning grids to create your own ideas. **$10.00.**

83

Little Spice Shelf

Little Spice Shelf, Inc. Looking for the unique? Take a peek! Exquisite items for gift-giving or for you alone. For those who truly appreciate quality and devotion to detail. Handcrafted inlaid wood pieces, woven baskets, and individually designed creations. Featuring gourmet delectables and treasures for the gift explorer. Discriminating? You'll enjoy shopping from our "shelves." **$2.50.**

84

LONG JOHN ®
SHIRTS

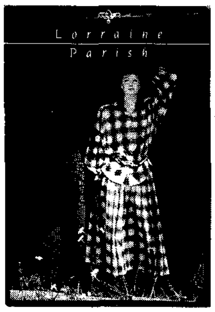
Long John Shirts. Please call or send away to Long John Shirts for a catalogue of their complete line of clothing. Toll free 1-800-821-3327 or in California, 1-800-531-6514. **$1.00.**

85

Lord & Taylor

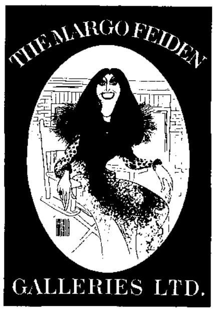
Lord & Taylor. The Lord & Taylor Christmas Books are very specially edited with delightful gift ideas for everyone on your list, celebrating the best of American design for you, your family, your home. In addition to these two idea-filled books, we will be happy to send you the entire Lord & Taylor Christmas Series. **$5.00.**

86



Lorraine Parish. Lorraine Parish "This year's best mail order catalogue..." *Village Voice.* "Elegant, old-world resort feeling and seasonless fabrics," *Palm Beach Post.* "Elegant clothes which are simple and chic," *Elle.* Designed on Martha's Vineyard in Italian wools and cashmeres. Catalogue subscription, **$5.00.**

87

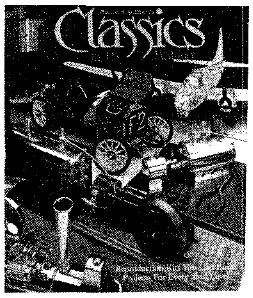


The Margo Feiden Galleries. Al Hirschfeld's dazzling drawings, watercolors, lithographs, and etchings, spanning 60 years of the genius's work. Hirschfeld is represented exclusively by The Margo Feiden Galleries. Telephone inquiries invited: (212) 677-5330. 75 University Place, Greenwich Village, New York City 10003. Arguably the most beautiful art gallery in the world. Delicious catalogue, **$7.00.**

88

Mark T. Wendell, Importer. Serving tea connoisseurs since 1904. We invite you to try our high-quality teas; our sampler contains 10 one-ounce packets of our fine teas including World Famous Hu-Kwa. Send for our catalogue listing the sampler as well as 31 additional teas and gift packages. **Free.**

89



Mason & Sullivan Company. A new and unique concept in kit building and leisure time activities, presented in a colorful, award-winning catalogue. Projects designed to suit all interests and skill levels, including the very finest in ship modeling, live steam, scaled reproductions, needlework, clocks, weather kits, and more. Works of art you can build. **$1.00.**

90

MAURICE BADLER
FINE JEWELRY
For those who know . . . for those who want to know.

Maurice Badler. Send for the exclusive catalogue of fine jewelry from Maurice Badler. You'll admire the classic designs, the meticulous workmanship. Then imagine the look, the feel, on you, on friends. And note the discounted prices (from 25%–40%) and the 30-day money-back guarantee. **$3.00.**

91

The MIT Museum Shop. Computerized jewelry, architecture kits, and fascinating puzzles to captivate great minds of all ages and interests. Send for our full-color catalogue of books, games, and technological whimsy. **$1.00.**

92

MONT BLANC
THE ART OF WRITING

Montblanc Fine Writing Instruments. Our brand new catalogue introduces the stylish and elegant Noblesse line. Also included are the new SL line and the timeless, extremely popular Masterpiece pen. Since 1908, Montblanc has been manufacturing the world's finest writing instruments, each clearly identified by the renowned snowcap logo. **$2.00.**

93

The
Museum
of
Modern
Art

The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The best in contemporary design for personal or business gifts. Over 300 products, many represented in the Museum's Design Collection. Furniture, lamps, crystal, personal, desk-top and travel accessories, housewares, tools, toys, puzzles, books, cards, calendars, and posters—some produced exclusively for the Museum. **$3.00** for a one-year subscription.

94

THE NATURE COMPANY

The Nature Company. Books, Discovery Tools, Recordings, Fine Arts, Gifts, and Gear for Outdoor Lovers of All Ages. **$2.00.**

95

Neiman-Marcus

Neiman-Marcus. All your holiday fantasies come to life in the new 1987 Neiman-Marcus Christmas Book. Over 125 colorful pages of uncommon fashions. Extravagant baubles. Fanciful delights for those who discriminate. And another outrageous "His & Hers" Gift. Shop conveniently with one call to our 24-hour toll-free number and charge everything to your N-M credit card. Call 1-800-NEIMANS (Dept. 7387), to open an account and charge your subscription. **$5.00,** applicable towards your first purchase from the Christmas Book.

96

N.Peal
Cashmere

N. Peal. N. Peal, established since 1819 and situated in the historic Burlington Arcade, has a reputation for the finest, most exclusive men's and ladies' Scottish Cashmere in the world. 37 Burlington Arcade, London W.1. England. Tel: 011-493 9220. Catalogue, **$5.00.**

97

The Museum Store
The New-York Historical Society

N.Y. Historical Society. Shop by mail from the Museum Store at New York's oldest museum. Books, posters, holiday cards, and special gift items for personal and corporate use. Many from The Society's own collection are featured. Categories include: New York, American art, architecture, and history; special sections on the Constitution and Audubon. **$1.00.**

98

FALL 1987

SELECTIONS

Keep an eye out for the upcoming March 1988 "Selections," where you'll find a fresh and fascinating array of new spring collections to peruse and purchase from home. Be sure to read through it before embarking on next season's shopping spree!

Norm Thompson
"ESCAPE from the ordinary"

Norm Thompson. Page after page of extraordinary items await your perusal. Classic fashions. Innovative footwear. Intriguing food items. One-of-a-kind gifts. All quality products of enduring value. All backed by the strongest guarantee in the business! "ESCAPE from the ordinary®" with our catalogue. **Free.**

99

Orchid Express®

Orchid Express. Discover the perfect gift. Turn any occasion into a memorable event by sending these elegant and unique sprays of orchids. Long lasting orchids by Orchid Express make a stunning display in the home or office. Orchids for all seasons are shipped fresh from Santa Barbara year 'round. Send for catalogue. **$1.00.**

100

patagonia®

Patagonia.® Clothes for crossing the Kalhitna Pass, racing off Cape Flattery, drinking Guinness in Cork, skiing the Trans Sierra, and other worthwhile pursuits. See the entire Patagonia line of innovative, functional clothing for the outdoors in our 86-page color catalogue. **$3.00.**

101

the pet catalog
pedigrees pedigrees pedigrees pedigrees pedigrees pedigrees pedigrees

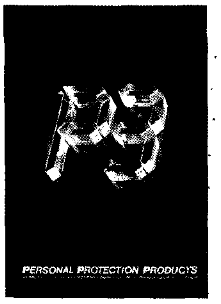
Pedigrees. The Pet Catalog was created especially for people who love their pets. It's filled with unique and hard-to-find items that let your pet look and feel special. Personalized collars, clothing, grooming and kennel supplies, novelties featuring your breed, and great items for you that tell the world how much you love your pet. 40-page color catalogue. **Free.**

102

PERSNICKETY

Persnickety. Persnickety has planned a unique catalogue featuring special sections such as "For Ladies Only," "A Gentleman's Way," and "Children's Delights." This 40-page full-color catalogue also offers a distinctive collection of window treatments, clocks, coverlets, Christmas giftware, and our own renowned collection—some exclusively for Persnickety. **$2.00.**

103



Personal Protection Products. World leader in the manufacture and design of sophisticated security equipment for the individual and corporate communities during the past 25 years, has opened an office/showroom at 405 Park Avenue, Suite 1203, New York City, (212) 421-4757. A prestigious catalogue is available for **$20.00** (credited towards first purchase).

104

PLEASANT COMPANY

THE AMERICAN GIRLS COLLECTION

❤

Pleasant Company. Introducing a unique, new collection designed especially for girls, ages 6–11. Beautiful books, lovable dolls and accessories, plus exquisite girls' clothing. All created exclusively for The American Girls Collection. Available only from Pleasant Company. Send for the full-color catalogue that tells a story. **$2.00.**

105

THE POPCORN FACTORY

The Popcorn Factory. No one ever forgets the person with enough imagination to send 6½ gallons of popcorn in one of our exclusively designed containers. We also recommend our almond pecan corn, chocolate pizza, and other delicious confections. We can also personalize a variety of items with a name or company logo. Memorable gifts priced as low as $10.00. Holiday catalogue. **Free.**

106

poster originals limited

Poster Originals. All the artists you thought you couldn't afford are in Poster Originals' 140-page full-color catalogue. **$10.00,** refundable on orders of $75.00 and over.

107

POTTERY BARN

A CATALOG OF NEW TRADITIONS

The Pottery Barn. A catalogue of new traditions. A world of elegant, affordable home furnishings that give expression to your sense of personal style. **Free** catalogue. (Delivery begins October 15, 1987.)

108

PRAIRIE EDGE

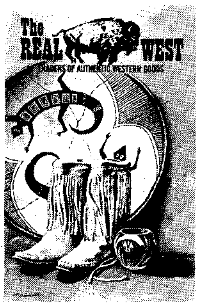
Prairie Edge. Exclusive handcrafted plains Indian art, artifacts, and jewelry, including mounted buffalo skulls, shields, painted elk, deer, and buffalo robes, dance sticks, axes, lances, knives, bow and arrow sets, shirts, doll rattles, ceremonial pipes, bone jewelry, silver jewelry, and many more unusual items. Many southwestern style designs. **$2.00** USA, $5.00 foreign.

109

the PRINCETON University Store

The Princeton University Store. Our catalogue features an astonishing variety of Princeton insignia T-shirts, sweatshirts, active wear, giftware, and children's apparel. In addition, you'll find fine clothing for men and women, reflecting the traditional Princeton values of quality and style. Send for our 24-page full-color catalogue. **$1.00.**

110



The Real West. Think beyond seasons, fads, and trends. Create a classic all-American look. Buy what foreign ports are clamoring for, the look of The Real West. Contemporary and historical decoratives, gifts, jewelry, apparel, and collectibles. Representative of and made in the American West. You'll be intrigued if looking for the unusual. **$2.00.**

111

Recorded Books, Inc.

Recorded Books. Listen to unabridged best-sellers while you drive. John Le Carré, Paul Theroux, Tom Clancy, and many more, expertly narrated on cassette. *Rent* unabridged Recorded Books quickly and simply through the mail. Write now for your catalogue listing scores of best-sellers, histories, mysteries, and more, unabridged on Recorded Books on cassette. **$1.00.**

112

QUALITY OUTDOOR GEAR AND CLOTHING REI SINCE 1938

REI. REI has the right gear and clothing for your outdoor adventures—from bicycling around the block to climbing the Himalayas. Our money-back guarantee ensures your satisfaction. **Free.**

113

Saffran. Saffran, extraordinary clothing from Sweden, is now available in the U.S., with fresh yet timeless design, high quality, and rich colors. Saffran is made of pure natural fibers. Incredible comfort in sizes 6 to 18. Some men's styles are also offered. 40-page color catalogue, **$2.00.**

114

Save the Children's Craft Shop

Save the Children Craft Shop. A holiday catalogue of crafts and clothing made by hand in local communities and self-help groups in many countries throughout the world. Fascinating jewelry and decorative art, truly unique and beautiful things to wear; toys, gifts, tree trimmings and more—all authentic folk art treasures. Save the Children Crafts Catalogue, **$2.00** (credited to first order).

115

SEGRETS SUN PRINTS

Segrets Sun Prints. Our Spring 1988 Original Print Sportswear Collection for Men and Women offers a wide selection of colorful, coordinating prints—sunny but sophisticated, playful yet elegant. Our new 12-page catalogue will introduce you to Segrets Sportswear: fresh, comfortable clothes that are fun to wear, in 100% cotton. **Free.**

116

S.E. RYKOFF & CO.
Foods and Cookware of Distinction
Since 1911

S.E. Rykoff & Co. Since 1911, S.E. Rykoff & Co. has been a source of foods and cookware to some of the finest chefs in the country. And now our catalogue brings us into the home kitchen. From salmon steaks and fresh caviar to Belgian chocolates and sun-dried tomatoes, our catalogue is an indispensible source of gourmet foods. 48-page catalogue, **$1.00.**

117

Shaker Workshops®

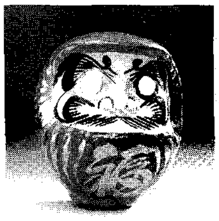
Shaker Workshops. An exciting collection of reproduction Shaker rockers, dining chairs, tables, beds, and other furniture available in kits or custom-finished. All exemplify the simplicity and versatile beauty of Shaker design. A 48-page color catalogue, **$1.00.**

118

SGF
SAVINGS ON GIFTS AND FURNISHINGS

Savings On Gifts And Furnishings. Substantial savings of 20% to 70% on top quality merchandise. Brand name furniture, rugs, linens, dinnerware, jewelry, and more. For a year of SGF catalogues, send **$2.00.**

119



Shibumi Trading

Shibumi Trading Ltd. In Japan a Daruma Doll symbolizes absolute commitment to an endeavor. One eye is painted when a project is started; the second is filled in only upon successful completion. Our newly expanded catalogue features this and other examples of Japanese culture, such as kimonos, scrolls, home furnishings, cookware, and over 100 books on Japan. Special sections include items for children and businessmen. Satisfaction guaranteed. 1-800-843-2565. **$2.00.**

120

Shop the World by Mail

Shop The World By Mail. Catalogues from around the world. 120 catalogues from 25 countries enabling you to purchase china, crystal, silver, linens, handicrafts, furs, jewelry, clothing, cars, coins, perfumes, etc. at tremendous savings direct from factories, retail shops and craftsmen in Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, etc. Revised 1987 color catalogue. **$4.00.**

121

SIGNALS
A Catalog For Fans And Friends
Of Public Television

Signals. Look to us for an exclusive selection of unique gifts related to your favorite public television programs. Video and audio tapes, books, clothing, educational toys, and games for virtually every age and every interest. **$1.00.**

122

SMITH & HAWKEN

Smith & Hawken. Our catalogue for gardeners brings you gardening implements, accessories, and furniture of the finest quality and value. Browse in England, Italy, and France for spades, watering cans, terracotta, books, shears, and planters. Satisfaction assured. **Free.**

123

Snug Company. Snug has earned its reputation in the elite mountain resorts of America: Sun Valley, Vail, Deer Valley. Now after fifteen years of providing thoughtful service to a discerning clientele, we are pleased to offer a personal consultation service to assure the quality, comfort, and exclusive selection you search for in sporting clothing. Aspire to the best. Catalogue, **Free.**

124

Society Expeditions

Society Expeditions. Our sea, land, and rail adventures take inquisitive travellers to Antarctica, Amazon, New Guinea, South Pole, aboard the mysterious Orient Express, and more. Always in search of exotic cultures and wildlife, expeditions are accompanied by recognized scientists and naturalists. Color catalogues from the world leader in luxury expedition travel. **$2.00.**

125

MENSWEAR

A Spiegel Specialty Catalog

Spiegel Menswear. Required reading for the well-dressed man. Tasteful, quality clothes, up-to-date but not outrageous, appropriate for the way you live. Contemporary classics for the office, standouts for nights out, relaxed looks for time off. 52 pages. Send **$2.00,** applicable to any purchase, or call 1-800-345-4500 (Dept. 415).

126

Spiegel®

The New Spiegel Christmas Book. Wonderful toys, electronics, and other gifts to delight family and friends. Fabulous holiday fashion and sparkling entertainment ideas. Plus a trim-the-tree shop and accessories to enhance the season. Over 400 pages. Call 1-800-345-4500 (ask for catalogue 375), or send **$3.00,** applicable to any purchase.

127

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THE THEATRE

Shakespeare in the Park

CLOSING the New York Shakespeare Festival's twenty-fifth season at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park this year is a production of "Henry IV, Part I," directed by Joe Papp. It's fairly typical of Central Park Shakespeare in that the less you know about the play, the better off you are. The approach that Mr. Papp takes to "Henry" is roughly the same approach that the Marx Brothers take to a legal contract in "A Night at the Opera": what he likes he keeps; what he doesn't like he tears off and throws away. He doesn't seem to like the first scene of the play: this production begins with Scene 2. He doesn't seem to like the characters Owen Glendower, his son-in-law Mortimer, and Mortimer's Welsh-speaking wife: this production does not portray them. It may be better judged on what it lacks than on what it boasts: it lacks a good deal of the play's most revealing dialogue, some of its finest imagery, and a coherent notion of what the play is about. It boasts a performance by Donald Moffat as Falstaff.

I wish I could find something positive to say about Mr. Moffat beyond the fact that he delivers his lines surely and lucidly. It is unquestionably a competent performance. But Mr. Moffat's Falstaff is somewhat indistinct. He possesses none of the qualities the character must have to carry the play. He seems neither particularly dangerous nor particularly charismatic—just sort of ordinary. He might be any old man in English literature. More than anything else, "Henry IV, Part I" is what the scholars call a psychomachia, a struggle between the values of misrule and the values of chivalry for Prince Hal's soul—misrule here represented by Falstaff, chivalry by Hotspur, the young nobleman who figures so prominently in the rebellion against the King. Both sets of values have their problems; Hotspur's notions of "honour," though lovely and lyrical, are a little outdated and demonstrably incapable of surviving in the real world. Falstaff, particularly, is an ambiguous figure; he can be seen as either a "sweet creature of bombast" or a "villainous abominable misleader of youth" (Hal calls him both). But, whichever view of Falstaff a director decides to emphasize, in order for us to get caught up in the play's drama we must be able to sense both Falstaff's tremendous appeal and the sinister implications of his moral viewpoint. Mr. Moffat makes us aware of neither.

It's too bad that Mr. Moffat's performance isn't more compelling; there's little else to hold our attention. Every aspect of the production is routine. Mr. Papp's one innovation has been to set the play entirely in the Boar's Head Tavern, as a play within a play—though for what purpose I can't think, unless it was to save David Mitchell, the scenic designer, from having to provide more than a few beer kegs and mock-Tudor beams by way of a set. Beyond this, the idea that staging, music, lighting, costumes, or scenery can create or comment on the world of a play seems not to have occurred to anyone. Theoni Aldredge's costumes keep the company clad, Jules Fisher's lighting makes the stage visible, Peter Golub's music reminds us, with the occasional fanfare, that we are watching a history play. Even the fight sequences (by Malcolm Ranson) look staged. And the production is full of gaffes. Hal (Tony Soper) addresses the opening lines of his famous soliloquy—"I know you all, and will awhile uphold/The unyok'd humour of your idleness"—to the house, as though it were we, the audience, rather than his departing friends, whose company he intended to forswear when the time came for his "reformation." And in Act V, when Hal comes onstage entreating Falstaff to "lend me thy sword," Mr. Soper staggers out empty-handed, gesturing for Falstaff's sword. What the line means is "Bring your sword to my aid," for blood is flowing, brave men are dying all around, and Falstaff stands idly in the field doing nothing. Conjuring Falstaff in the name of good fellowship, as well as the duty he owes his future monarch, Hal is asking his old drinking companion to join in the fray. To direct this scene as though Hal, having lost his own weapon, literally wanted to borrow Falstaff's is a bit like putting a literal construction on Mark Antony's enjoinder "Lend me your ears."

There are other directorial lapses: the staging is poor, the blocking static, and the pacing desperately slow throughout. Life at the Boar's Head seems more turgid than diverting or entertaining. (Mr. Papp does try to liven things up with a gratuitous piece of audience participation.) For the most part, though, what makes this production of "Henry" so tedious is the acting. There is much hamming from the British members of the cast, while many of the Americans seem not to understand their lines. Mr. Soper is a rather bland Hal; he delivers his lines with a sense of the poetry, but with no conviction, and so fails to have moral impact. Conan McCarty plays young Hotspur as though he were playing Hamlet: thinking, brooding, rationalizing in soliloquy. His Percy is neither comic nor noble in his passionate tirades. (He should be both.) As Mistress Quickly, Theresa Merritt seems not to know she is playing a comic role. Michael Zaslow's King Henry

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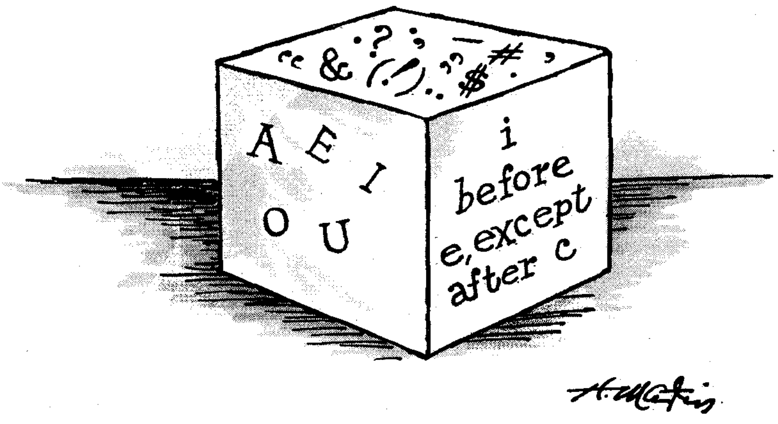
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is properly regal and commanding. Mr. Zaslow leaves the audience in no doubt as to who Henry is; but his *performance misses something of the* complexity of "subtle Bolingbroke." As for the other actors, they seem on the whole undirected. It would be unkind to belabor the faults of their individual performances; together, they are like musicians who, playing all the right notes of a symphony, fail to make music because they fail to stir.

Of course, what goes on inside the Delacorte Theatre is only half of Shakespeare in the Park—the downside. The upside of the experience is the part that critics don't get to share: the sitting around in Central Park waiting for your ticket. You set aside a Sunday or part of an afternoon and take your blanket and your friend and go and lie in the sun with a book. You don't get much reading done because of the soccer players and softball players, the strains of folk-dance music coming from over by King Jagiello's statue. There's a lot going on—the funny old man with a basket who walks around bothering people, telling them to "make a wish—in any language," the not very good puppeteer who plays the "Masterpiece Theatre" theme on the kazoo and does a one-man, ten-minute parody of the play from behind a stand-up tent. So instead of reading you watch little girls playing timeless games in a nearby tree and look forward to the play with a childlike anticipation that should have been stamped out years ago (by how many mediocre productions of Shakespeare?) but somehow never was.

This summer, in honor of the N.Y.S.F.'s twenty-fifth anniversary, I went through the park-sitting routine. I did the whole bit: I sat there for four hours, watched the children and the soccer players and the puppet show, put money in the old man's basket, let the N.Y.S.F. official passing out plot synopses show me the misprint in the Folger edition (actually, he couldn't find it). And while I sat there I did a lot of thinking about Joe Papp and the New York Shakespeare Festival. I thought about the English teacher who used to take us to see Papp's productions on the principle that "any Shakespeare is better than no Shakespeare at all." Then I thought about the retired sailor I once met standing in the rain outside the Delacorte Theatre, who told me he'd seen every production ever put on there.

I bought a "25th Anniversary Souvenir Book" and sat perusing it for a while. There I learned some interesting things. Papp really covered a lot of ground in those early years and used *the time well: in the first ten seasons* there wasn't a single repeat. Many of the later productions were things I had to admit I wouldn't have wanted to see. (Judy Collins in "Peer Gynt"? Meatloaf in "As You Like It"? Charles Durning in "Twelfth Night"? Martin Sheen in "Romeo and Juliet"?) But I was surprised to see from the photographs how relatively straightforward and ungimmicky early Central Park Shakespeare had been; the craziness—the pop stars and the musicals and all the non-classical productions—didn't set in until later. And (if you don't count "The Two Noble Kinsmen") Papp really has managed to produce all but one of the plays.

That English teacher of mine was of two minds about Falstaff: she could see his connection with the vice figure in morality plays, but she could also see the truth in the old knight's "Banish plump Jack and banish all the world!" I used to think Papp had a lot to answer for to a generation of children brought up on fourth-rate Shakespeare—my generation. I guess I still do. Papp isn't a director so much as he is an entrepreneur. He knows how to raise money, stir up enthusiasm, and show the city off to advantage, but I don't think he knows or cares very much about Shakespeare. All the same, you have to hand it to the guy: he really has created a wonderful tradition—if not a great theatrical event, at least a great civic one.

—MIMI KRAMER

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Dale and Donita Ford, Twin Falls, Idaho, and John and JoAnne Nelson, Wisdom, announce the engagement of their children, Lori Ann Ford and Rohn Ray Nelson.

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—*Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian.*

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[*From Monitor, an electronic-publishing newsletter*]

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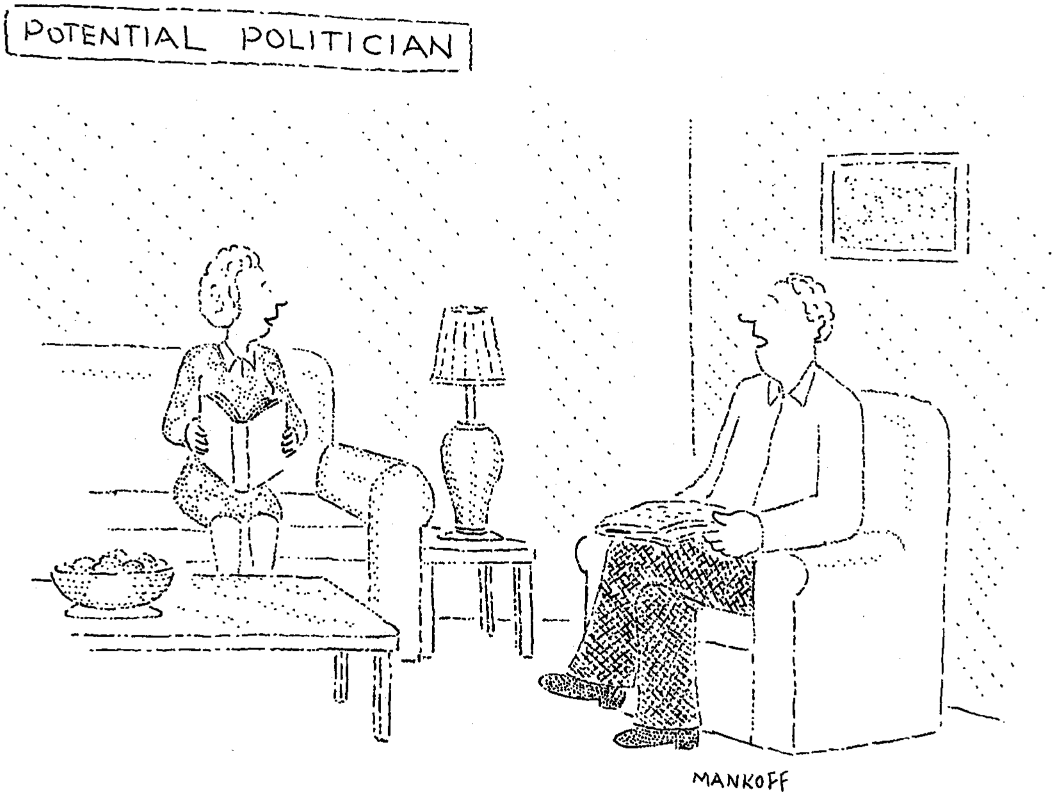
No Shelter

"HAMBURGER HILL" tells the story of a squad of fourteen American soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division who on May 10, 1969, encountered the North Vietnamese at the base of a jungle hill known as Dong Ap Bia. Ordered to take the hill, they made eleven assaults on it during the next ten days while the Air Force made two hundred and seventy-two sorties and dropped a million pounds of bombs, including a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of napalm. When the battle was over and the Americans held the peak, the survivors gave it its new name. What makes the film distinctive is that it doesn't provide the viewer with any shelter. You don't get melodrama to fall back on; you don't have the reassurance of plot. "Hamburger Hill" doesn't offer the jingo heroism of "Rambo," or the impassioned metaphorical good-and-evil of "Platoon," or the neat parcel of guilt supplied by "Full Metal Jacket." It's a straightforward, unblinking account of the interrelationships of these young men—most of them boys of nineteen.

The director, John Irvin ("Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy," "The Dogs of War," "Raw Deal," "Turtle Diary"), was born in Liverpool, of Scottish parents, during the blitz; in 1969, he was in Vietnam, shooting a documentary. The scriptwriter, Jim Carabatsos, served in Vietnam, and has been trying to write about it ever since (in "Heroes" and the vandalized "Heartbreak Ridge"). The writing here is sometimes a shade too heartfelt, but Irvin doesn't let the young actors sentimentalize—he keeps things as plainspoken as he can. Every now and then, the medic (Courtney Vance) will overarticulate a line or hype his character, but most of the talk is lifelike. The black soldiers bitch about the unfairness of their having to be in Vietnam, but they're bitching to the wrong white kids—grunts who are just as trapped as they are (though the blacks don't see it that way). Many of the kids are bitter about the way the war protesters at home look down on them; some of them imagine that while they're sweating in the jungle the peaceniks are making out with their girls. The soldiers are uncomprehending and confused. Perhaps the most naïve is Sergeant Worcester (Steven Weber), who is convinced that they're there to help the South Vietnamese fight the Communists; in the introductory scenes, he gets sore and upset when a girl in a brothel refers to the war as the Americans' war. These tensions almost break up a hot-tub party, but Worcester's pal Sergeant Frantz (Dylan McDermott) calms things down by blandly assuring him that the war is everybody's. Later, though, when the men are dying, the lieutenant (Tegan West), talking to headquarters and ordered to proceed, tries to indicate what they're up against. He's told that he's being paid to fight this war, not to discuss it. The men at headquarters aren't going to see what they're ordering the grunts to do—they're not engaged in the same war.

Most of the film's power isn't in the talk; it's in the terror and the foreignness—the far-from-homeness—of the imagery. Just after the opening, a wounded grunt is carried through tall grass onto a copter; he dies and the air is filled with a white spray of sparks. Is it a shell bursting? It has no right to be so incredibly lovely. The film cuts to a shot of a little Vietnamese girl sitting under a green umbrella—just sitting there. The shots of copters in swirling skies and of downwash in the grass leave a viewer a little stunned—dislocated. So does the sense you get of how random the casualties are. The fireworks in the sky take an indiscriminate toll of the men in the jungle below. After one of the boys is hit, there's no body to be found; the huge leaves of thick, strange plants are spattered with blood and flesh.

The men keep going up the hill, and being driven back by enemy fire; when it rains, they slide down the mud while the North Vietnamese throw grenades at them. Crawling along through the mud, one grunt finds himself lying on top of another, who has been hit. At times, the task assigned them seems hopeless—Sisyphean. The medic, wounded, complains of the enemy, "We've been up that hill ten



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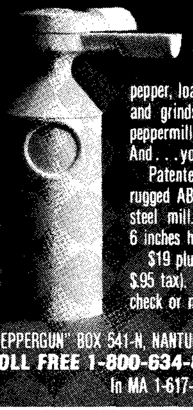

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times, and they still don't think we're serious." When, in the eleventh attempt, the men "take" it, the moviemakers are under no illusions about the accomplishment. The taking of this pile of mud, blasted trees, and bunkers is about on the level of building the bridge on the River Kwai. (The Americans soon abandoned the hill.) Yet taking it is what these grunts' world has been reduced to. They follow orders; they fight because their country tells them to fight. And the movie—without illusions—respects their loyalty to one another and their suffering. The casualties are seventy per cent; most of the squad give their lives to the hill. We see them doing it, but the brutality is never lingered on. When a young man (M. A. Nickles) whom we first notice because he is wearing a Band-Aid and looks like an actorish Greg Louganis suddenly has no head, or the lieutenant, reporting back to the base on the phone, stands in shock with one arm shot off, you hardly see it—you absorb it almost subliminally. And it's more powerful this way. The terror is deeper—you don't just write it off as special effects. There's nothing "dramatic" to write off, either. John Irvin keeps the virtuosic effects in the mud sequences lean and controlled; he has the pride of a director who knows what he's doing. Almost inevitably, the hill comes to represent Vietnam, but it does so without histrionics.

Irvin and Carabatsos are aware that the grunt's-eye view won't help us understand what the United States was up to in Vietnam. (For that you'd need a movie about the brightly lighted offices where military strategy and military careerism intertwine.) What the moviemakers offer is admiration for the Vietnamese as fighters and grief for the Americans who left their bodies or their youth in that incomprehensible terrain. The movie isn't an inspired work of art. The script is no more than proficient; it merely touches the appropriate points to achieve a balanced view. And it's perhaps too superficially accurate about our baffled, ignorant young men. They don't make an abiding impression. We don't remember our glimpses of their lives—only their manner of leaving them. But the movie is a scrupulously honest memorial. It has great decency; it joins together terror and thoughtfulness.

MOST of us would probably agree with Cocteau that "the privileges of beauty are enormous," but do they include Sean Young's bad acting in "No Way Out"? She smirks when she means to be suave, and bares her teeth and jumps up and down when she means to be daring; she emits peals of phony laughter when she's being delightful. The audience seems perfectly content to have her put away early in the movie. (She may look like Kay Kendall, but she acts like a nutbird Ali MacGraw.)

"No Way Out" doesn't have an ounce of credibility, but the director, Roger Donaldson, whips the action along, with camera angles changing so fast you hardly have time to ask what the chases are for or why the story points don't follow through. The movie starts with booming timpani under the titles, and it keeps slamming ahead and never lets up. If it could, it would tear your clothes off. Instead, it semi-strips the bored cynic —Sean Young—and the smooth, deadpan lieutenant commander (Kevin Costner), who, having eyed each other at the President's Inaugural Ball and exchanged a cutting remark or two, make a dash for her stretch limo. They're meant to be recklessly, frantically hot; they seize each other. One kiss, and he undresses her, starting at the top; she tugs at her scanties, then helps him get out of his things, and they go at it while the driver coasts around the historic buildings, with special emphasis on the Washington Monument. (This is kiddie comix compared to the byplay between the taxi-driver and the couple in De Palma's "Dressed to Kill.") Sean Young is supposed to be a super-classy kept woman—the mistress of the Secretary of Defense (Gene Hackman)—and the plot hinges on her longtime connection with him being as secret as her brief dalliance with the lieutenant commander. But, considering the telegraphic, knowing glances that Young and Hackman exchange at a cocktail party, you'd expect these carryings on to be reported in every scandal sheet in America.

The movie swings into its gaga plot when Hackman finds out that she has a lover (though not who it is) and, in a rage, accidentally kills her. He tells his aide (Will Patton) what has happened; the aide dreams up the idea that the lover is an as yet undiscovered—perhaps only hypothetical—Russian agent named Yuri, who can be blamed for the murder. Needing a front man for this coverup, they arrange to have Costner put in charge of the search to find the lover and "neutralize" him. Does this sound as movieish as it is? The picture is a remake of "The Big Clock," which starred Charles Laughton as a Henry Luce figure; in the 1948 film, the action was set in something like the Time-Life headquarters. Now the chasing around takes place in the glass offices and corridors of the Pentagon—actually Stage 27 at the old M-G-M studios in Culver City. The new script, by Robert Garland, is metallic, and many of the performances rate a blank stare. Donaldson had an unconvincing central figure in his last film, "Marie," but the characters who filled the edges were an engrossing bunch; they gave the movie some feeling. Here the actors have almost nothing to work with. You have to keep your eye on the action, which is wherever Costner is; his peril is what the movie is about. The chief villain isn't Hackman, who begins as a supposedly flamboyant political tactician—an intellectual powerhouse—and then falls apart after the girl's death. (This doesn't come across as the Secretary's falling apart: rather, Hackman seems to be nullifying himself—saying, "I wish I weren't in this picture; maybe I can just pretend I'm not here.") The villain is Will Patton, the wormy yes-man aide, who's an old-time movie homosexual—unctuous, ruthless. And, what with this aide's pathological devotion to his boss, and his filthy habit of dispatching a pair of henchmen to kill people, the audience enjoys hissing him.

"No Way Out" is smashingly stupid, but a lot of people have a hot, jumpy response to the smashingness (and don't seem put off much by the stupidity). They sound excited by the transition from the staidness of the Inaugural Ball to the tigerish friskiness in the limo. They appear grateful for every bit of sex shock they get—mostly a display of thigh—and eager to think of it as something new. (I have heard the girl's instant avidity described as postmodern passion.) And the film extracts some paranoiac flash from the Washington settings and the traces of high-level nastiness: audiences can imagine that it has something to do with the recent investigations, that it gives them a muckraking, inside view of bureaucratic intrigue. (It's an indication of how screwed up the plot is that the C.I.A. men emerge as the good guys.) Finally, the picture, which is told from Costner's point of view, outsmarts itself in a surprise shift that betrays

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what we've been watching and makes fools of us. It has a logic, if you take the whole movie as a wacko joke on Oliver North as the Manchurian Candidate. But it's a surprise we don't want—a fizzle.

Donaldson has made a box-office wingding out of nothing (nothing but loose ends of plot), and with almost no help from the actors. As an eagerly rising young man, Costner has a pleasant air of not thinking too much of himself, and he gives you the impression that he's doing what's wanted of him. Still, this agile fellow who spends the whole movie in movement is the essence of laid back; he has no inner energy, no kinetic charge. It's Donaldson who provides the film's crude push, but without a richer script he can't provide the humor and the suggestions of meanness and kink that might have given this film-noir material some malevolence, some mystery. (Couldn't Patton have had some attraction to Costner? And why doesn't Costner show any resentment of Hackman? Is he hiding it?) This is a Yuppie thriller: it has no psychological layers. The only image that isn't clean and crisp—the only one that rates a second glance—comes from the attempt by the Pentagon's computer wizards to produce a photograph of the girl's lover by means of an undeveloped exposed Polaroid; the evolving blur is fascinatingly messy.

THE title "The Big Easy" is taken from the nickname for New Orleans, and the theme of the movie comes out of the reasons for that name—the patterns of corruption as well as the love of food, of music, of earthly pleasure. Dennis Quaid plays a half-Irish, half-Cajun police lieutenant who is relaxed about petty bribes. Vain and self-satisfied, he accepts free meals and small favors; to him that's part of the flavor of life—it's being friendly, it has nothing to do with crime. Ellen Barkin plays a new assistant district attorney from up North who is assigned to look into corruption in his precinct; she believes in the letter of the law—you can tell that from her drab tailored suits and her asexual prissiness. (Do moviemakers think they're being feminist when they use a heroine as a moral guidance counsellor? This voice-of-conscience role would weigh any actress down.) The lieutenant goes to work on her immediately in a few fairly explicit devilish-charmer-and-nervous-novice scenes, and her inhibitions melt away. The carnal humor of these moments is about the only thing the movie has going for it. But when he is videotaped accepting a bribe she freezes again. After a couple of reels of misunderstandings, he realizes that the police have been involved in a series of drug-related murders, and the two work together to bring the guilty to justice. That should have included the scriptwriters (Daniel Petrie, Jr., and Jack Baran).

Quaid incarnates the pleasure-loving intentions of the film, but the director, Jim McBride, rams him at us as soon as the titles are over. This is the first time I've felt myself pulling back from Quaid's image on the screen; I drew back even further from Barkin. McBride has them playing too broadly, and he has the camera too close in—the performers stick out of the film frame. In other pictures, Quaid and Barkin have had sizzling currents of talent; here they seem to have been told to sizzle, and you watch them trying. Quaid has given himself a breathy, raspy, accented voice that's acting-school goofy—he's got a Cajun cold in the nose. It matches the childlike "Let's pretend" quality of his cockiness. He's still likable, but it's a thin, cartoon performance. And Barkin makes faces at the camera, screwing her features around and twisting her mouth, stretching it across her face. You can't look at her, because she's always looking back in desperation. Most of the rest of the actors—Ned Beatty, Grace Zabriski, Lisa Jane Persky—also seem impaled by the camera. (So do the apartment interiors.) The picture has an amateurish, fifties-B-movie droopiness. Partly, this is agreeable (especially if you've been watching the hollow dynamics of big-time action films), but the only leading performers who aren't hurt by it are John Goodman, who generally remains in the background of the shots, and the great Charles Ludlam, who thrives on broadness. As a gentleman lawyer of Old Dixie, he rolls his eyes and wraps the picture like a ribbon around his panama hat.

—PAULINE KAEL

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KUWAIT claimed in a letter to the UN released yesterday that Iranians stormed its embassy in Tehran on August 1, two days after hundreds of Iranians were killed in the Mecca riot, AP reports. The letter said the mob had burnt its flag, taken documents and located the ambassador's car.—*Financial Times.*

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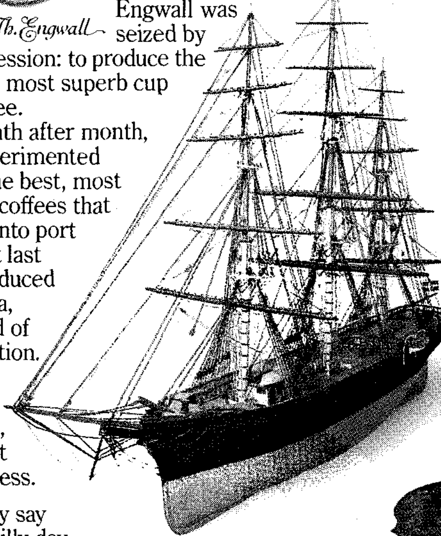

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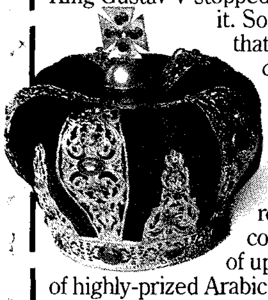

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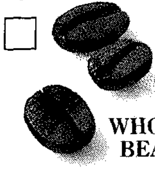
☐ 
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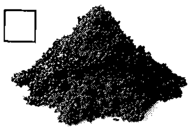
☐ 
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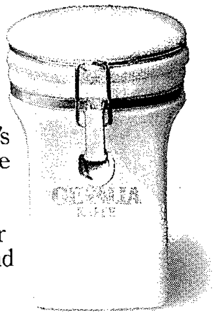

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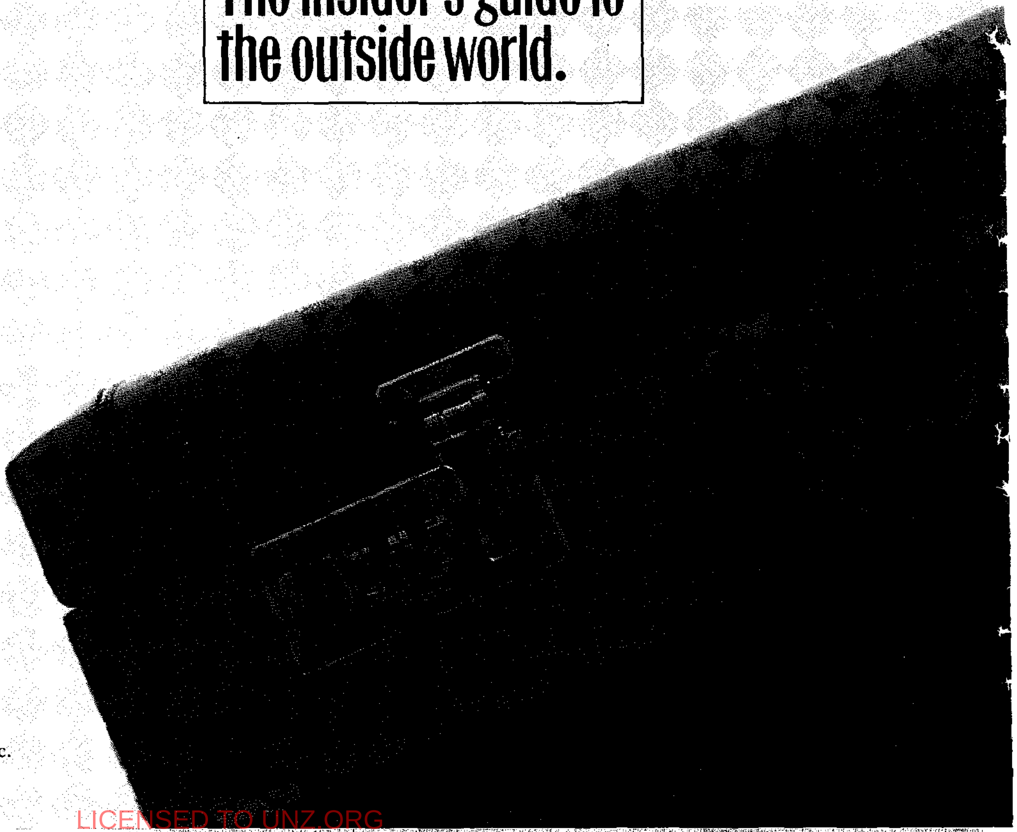

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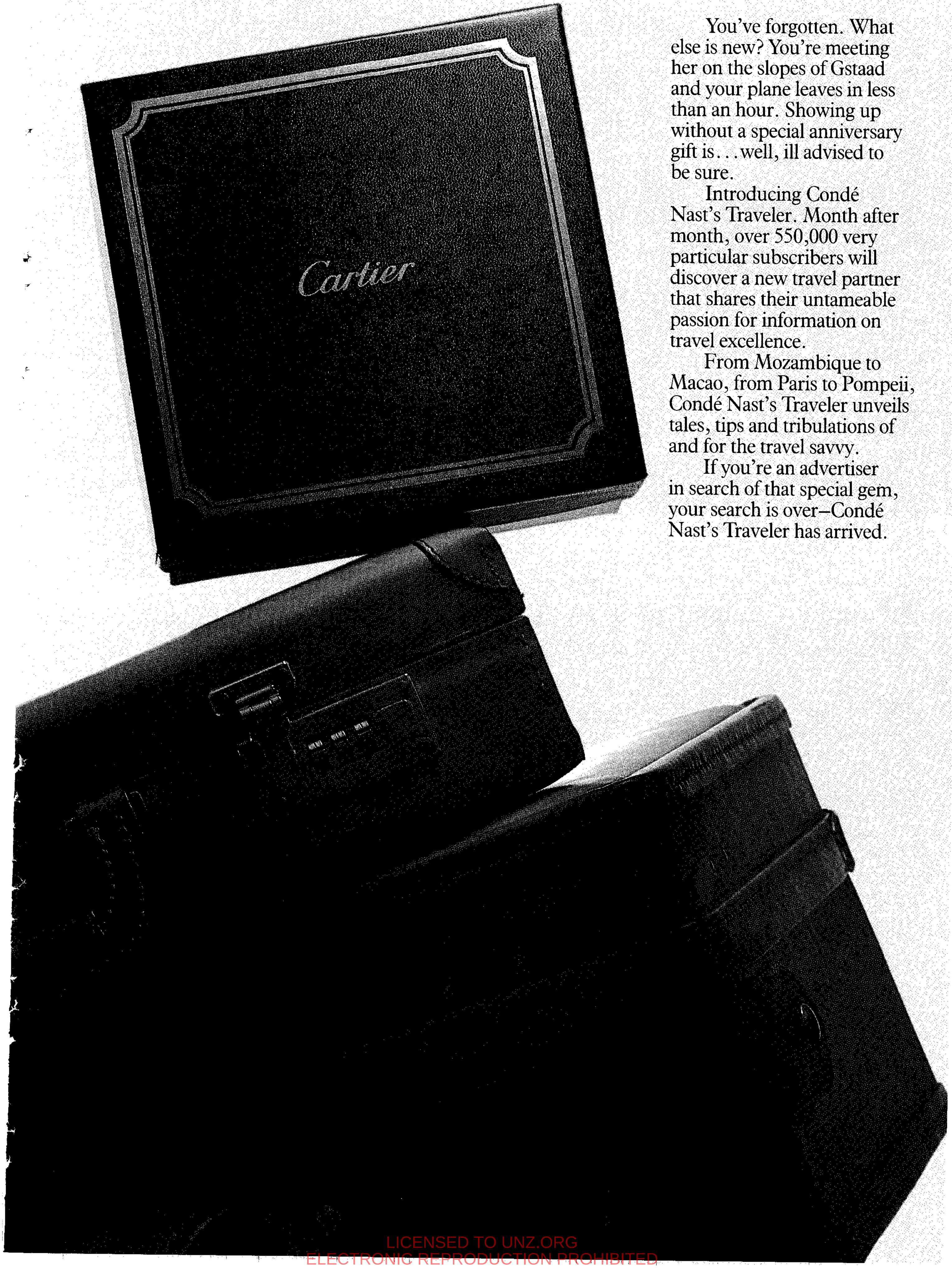

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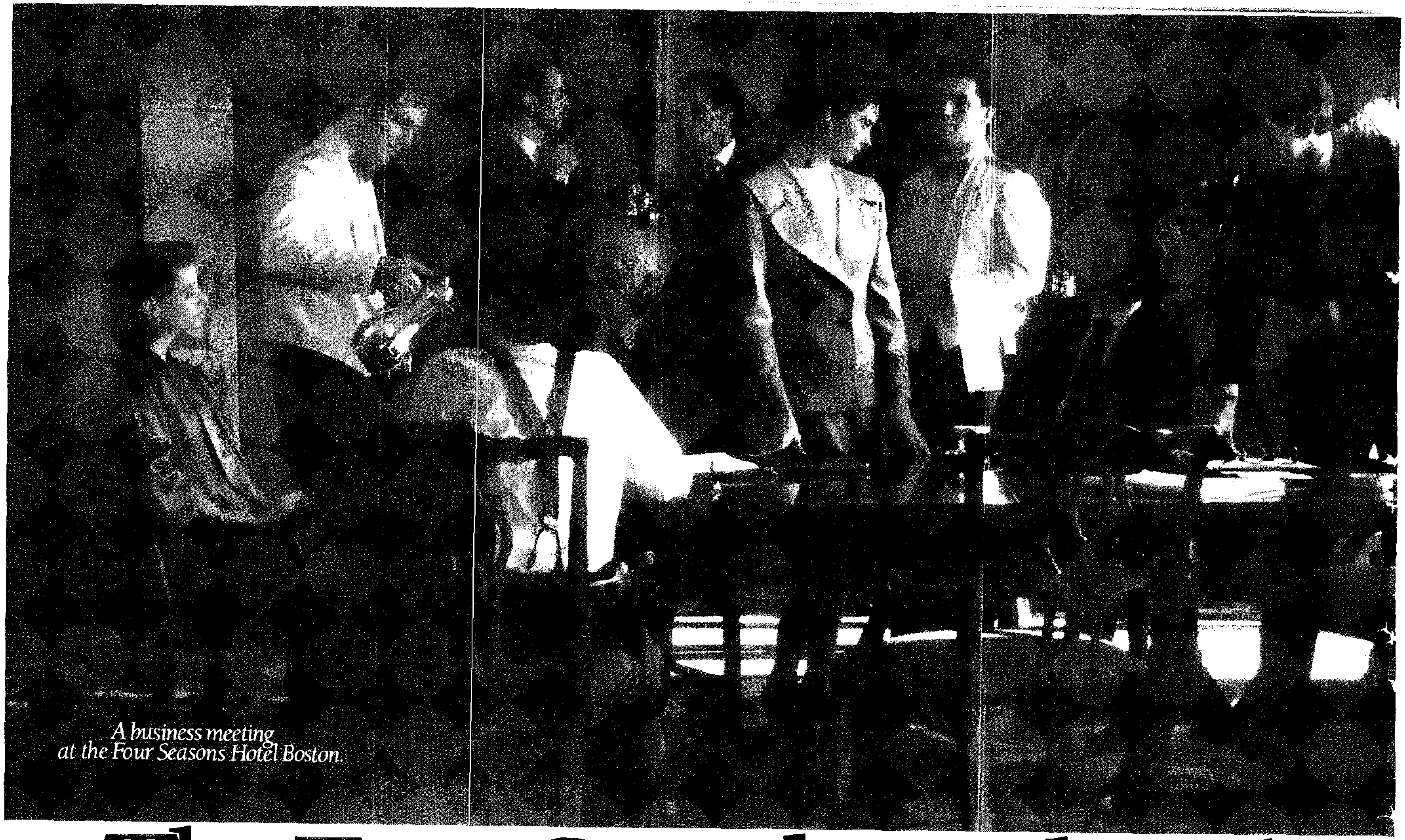

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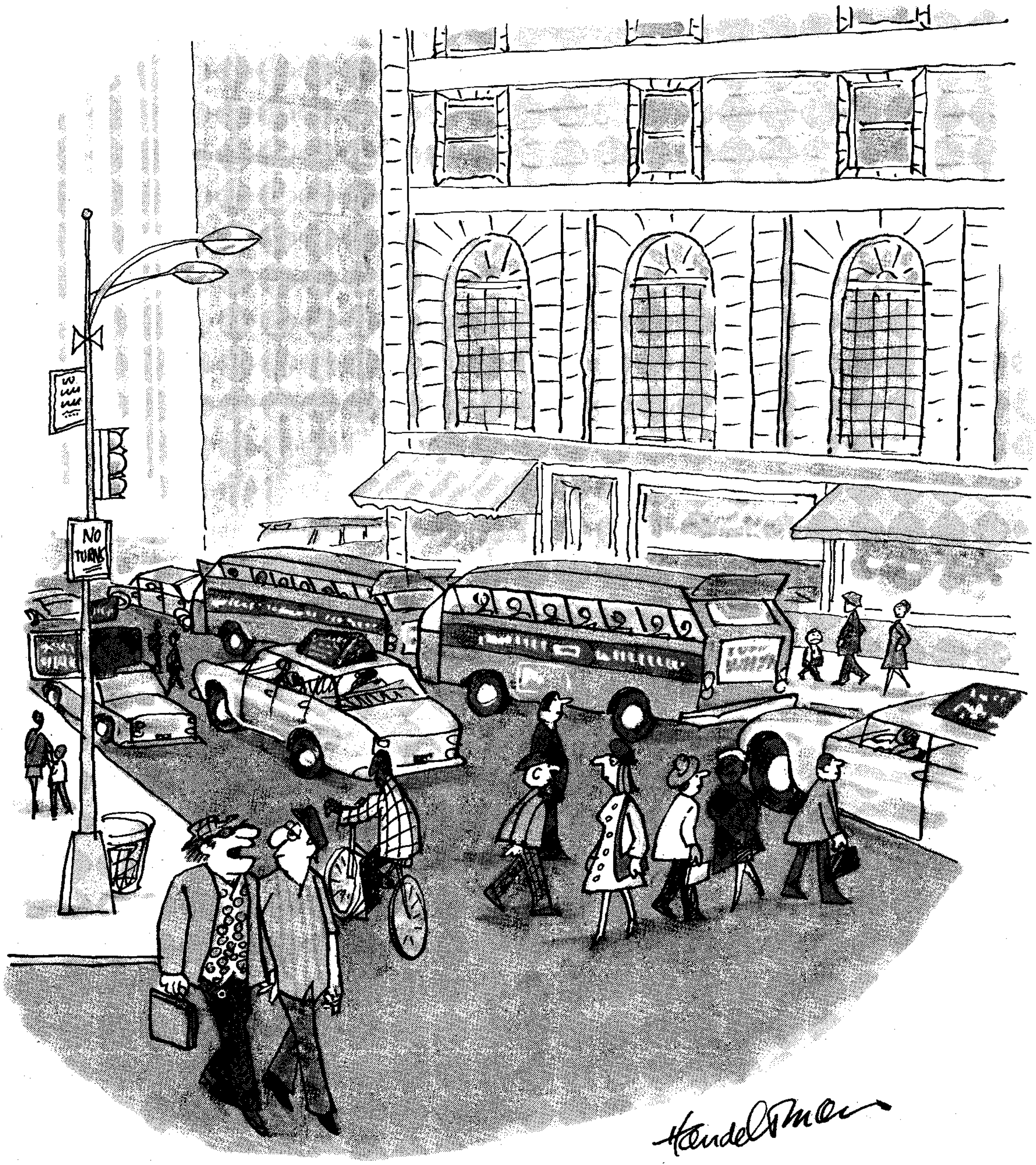
BOOKS

Deep Time and Computer Time

EUROPEAN man, who once dwelt with a certain unsanitary snugness on a flat world hedged in by Vikings and Saracens and enclosed by the chiming celestial spheres, has suffered a series of traumatic widenings of consciousness. First—and perhaps least unnerving, since it was accompanied by triumphs of conquest and trade—was the increased awareness of the earth's actual geography, as Italian merchants, Portuguese sailors, Spanish conquistadores, and British explorers brought back word of the vast Asian landmass, the long African coast, the two unsuspected continents of the New World, the watery vastness of the Pacific Ocean, and the icebound polar regions. Then there was astronomy, which showed the fixed nightcap of stars with its seven "wanderers" (the sun, the moon, and the five observable planets) to be the visible fraction of unthinkable extents of space and energy. The Copernican revolution removed the earth from the center of the universe but did not alter its scale; this the telescope, first used by Galileo, was to enlarge inexorably, until in the nineteen-twenties Edwin Hubble demonstrated that our Milky Way, with its millions of stars, was but one of millions of galaxies, which are generally flying from one another like shrapnel in a gargantuan explosion. In the direction of the small, lenses, as microscopes were developed in the seventeenth century, revealed a teeming sub-world of animalcules and microbes, beneath which lay an even finer world of molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles—dizzying depths of active complexity beyond the reach not only of the eye but of all direct observational apparatus. And in the dimension of time another abyss was uncovered by the geological sciences, whose early theorists include Leonardo and Descartes: by the late eighteenth century it had become clear that only huge amounts of elapsed time could account for the stratified, folded, eroded, fossiliferous state of the earth's rocks, which the Bible had declared to have been created only at the outset of its own historical record, in a year calculated to have been 4004 B.C.

The blasphemous and dwarfing revelation of "deep time" forms the underlying drama of Stephen Jay Gould's "Time's Arrow, Time's Cycle: Myth and Metaphor in the Discovery of Geological Time" (Harvard; $17.50). In the monthly essays with which Gould has been amusing



"You get out of line, Mitchell, and you'll never work in this town again. By 'this town' I mean, of course, Hollywood."

and edifying the readers of *Natural History* for some fifteen years, he now and then shows a surprisingly fond acquaintance with the debunked and forgotten theories that litter the history of science: the present book, an expanded version of lectures given at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, considers three early British geologists—Thomas Burnet (1635-1715), James Hutton (1726-1797), and Charles Lyell (1797-1875)—who he feels have been misrepresented in the contemporary textbook version of geology's progress. In "textbook cardboard" this progress is represented as the "victory of superior observation finally freed from constraining superstition"—the supplanting, that is, of fanciful, religion-tainted theories by the patient field work and inductive reasoning of true scientists. Yet, Gould argues, "Scientists are not robotic inducing machines that infer structures of explanation only from regularities observed in natural phenomena. . . . Scientists are human beings, immersed in culture, and struggling with all the curious tools of inference that mind permits—from metaphor and analogy to all the flights of fruitful imagination that C. S. Peirce called 'abduction.' "

Among the cultural metaphors that shaped the searching-out of deep time are those of time's arrow and time's cycle. Did the enigmatic evidence of the rocks show that the earth had a history proceeding from a beginning to an end, or was its geology a matter of endless cycles of erosion and repair, subsidence and uplift? The truth, Gould says, lies with both: the cycles move along an arrow. And Burnet, the textbook-deplored proponent of the Bible-inspired "Sacred Theory of the Earth" (1691), came closer to this double truth than Hutton's "Theory of the Earth" (first edition 1788) and Lyell's "Principles of Geology" (first edition 1830-33). "Hutton and Lyell, traditional discovers of deep time in the British tradition, were motivated as much (or more) by . . . a vision about time, as by superior knowledge of the rocks in the field. . . . Their visions stand prior—logically, psychologically, and in the ontogeny of their thoughts—to their attempts at empirical support." Hutton, to be more precise, was so much under the sway of Newton's magnificent analysis of heavenly motion as to impose a similarly perpetual and ideal mechanics upon geology, and Lyell was so caught up in his combat with the "catas-

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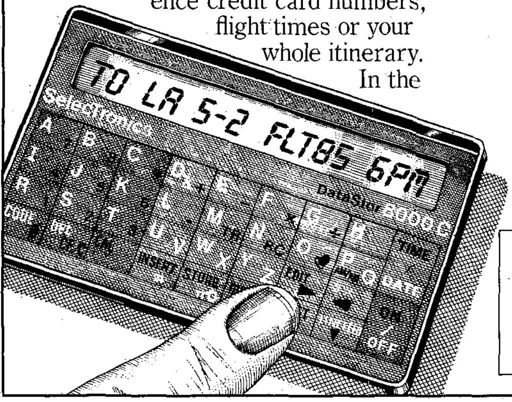

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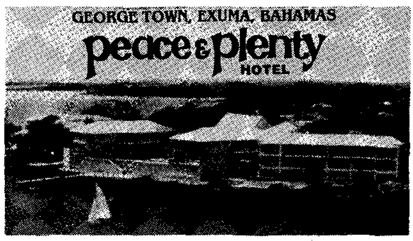

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trophists" on behalf of "uniformitarianism" as to ignore, until late in his life, the fact that earth's fossils do trace an irreversible history, and that strata of rock can be ordered by them.

If this sounds technical, it somewhat is. But geology has the charm that we all walk upon its raw material, and Gould's lucid, animated style, rarely slowed by even a touch of the ponderous, leads us deftly through the labyrinth of faded debates and preconceptions. His own contemporary engagement in the debate of "gradualists" in the matter of species evolution versus his and Niles Eldredge's theory of "punctuated equilibrium" lends verve to his exposition of old points of contention. Though gradual change, operating through great tracts of time, is now assumed to be the empirically proven mode of biological and evolutionary change, the evidence, Gould takes some pleasure in reminding us, favored and still favors the catastrophists:

> Read literally, then and now, the geological record is primarily a tale of abrupt transitions, at least in local areas. If sediments indicate that environments are changing from terrestrial to marine, we do not usually find an insensibly graded series of strata, indicating by grain size and faunal content that lakes and streams have given way to oceans of increasing depth. In most cases, fully marine strata lie directly atop terrestrial beds, with no signs of smooth transition. The world of dinosaurs does not yield gradually to the realm of mammals; instead, dinosaurs disappear from the record in apparent concert with about half the species of marine organisms in one of the five major mass extinctions of life's history. Faunal transitions, read literally, are almost always abrupt, both from species to species and from biota to biota.

To concede this abruptness, and to try to adopt a theory to fit it more closely than a dogmatic gradualism, does not make Gould a creationist, nor did it make Lyell's catastrophist opponents, such as Georges Cuvier and Louis Agassiz, any less empirical or scientific than he, and scarcely less right: "We must admit that current views represent a pretty evenly shuffled deck between attitudes held by Lyell and the catastrophists." Gould, with a passion that approaches the lyrical, argues for a retrospective tolerance in science and against fashions that would make heroes and villains of men equally committed to the cause of truth and equally immersed in the metaphors and presumptions of their culture and time. The situation of cosmology now, as it floridly sprouts suppositions of superheavy "strings" and extra dimensions rolled into tiny tubes and

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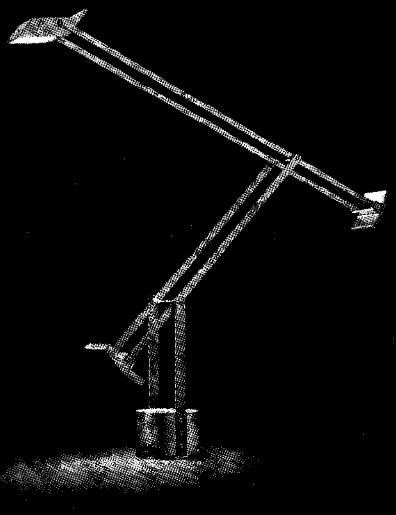

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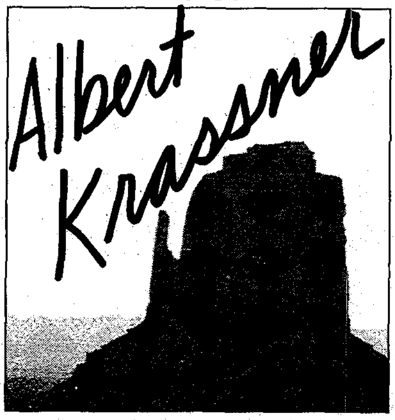

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violently “inflationary” or infinitely multiple universes, is perhaps analogous to that of nineteenth-century geology, where much hard evidence and sound reasoning existed intermingled with hypotheses that time would show to be, though no more fantastic than the truth, false. Gould implicitly asks that tolerance be extended to such contemporary guesses as the Alvarez hypothesis of asteroidal or cometary causation of the mass extinctions, and the theory of punctuated equilibrium, which merely proposes that speciation occurs in spurts, geologically speaking, at single bedding planes—that evolution, like most terrain, is lumpy and uneven.

The book ends with a surprising burst of Christian art—cathedral windows and bosses, and James Hampton’s great American folk sculpture, “The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations’ Millennium General Assembly.” With these art works Gould is saying more than that scientific theory is beautiful; he is emphasizing the Judeo-Christian arrow of time, which flies from Creation to Apocalypse, from Adam’s Fall to Christ’s Second Coming, from Noah’s Flood to Jesus’ Baptism. The Old and New Testaments are in a sense two cycles, which echo one another and yet register an advance; and this is also the way of the earth, which lifts up mountains and flattens them and raises them up again, and allows species to perish and others to arise and fill the same ecological niche with similar forms, and yet also has a history, an over-all change from a young, violent, oxygenless planet to the oxygen-rich and relatively stable one that supports our present unique chapter in the ongoing saga of life. The universe itself, which as recently as the nineteen-fifties could be plausibly imagined to exist in a “steady state” of perpetual atom-by-atom creation, also now seems, on its colossal scale, to be arrowing from a Big Bang fifteen billion years ago to an eventual end in entropy. The seventeenth-century cleric Thomas Burnet, though without much in the way of facts and with little notion of how truly deep time was, more accurately combined the metaphors of arrow and cycle than his successor geologists Hutton and Lyell, who both, in wishing to lift their science above the “complex contingencies” of “just history,” conceived of cycles without end or aim. Stephen Jay Gould, in his scrupulous explication of their carefully wrought half-truths, abolishes the unnecessary distinction between the humanities and science, and honors the latter as a branch of humanistic thought, fallible and poetic.

TIME is tackled from a wider angle, and more pugnaciously, in “Time Wars,” by Jeremy Rifkin (Holt; $18.95). Rifkin, president of the Foundation on Economic Trends, in Washington, D.C., is not the scientist or the writer that Gould is, but he has produced a brisk book that in little more than two hundred pages covers a large territory. “Time Wars” seems at least three books in one. First, it is a survey of how men have considered time, from the hunter-gatherers’ complete submission to “the migratory rhythms of the great herds of animals and the gestation and ripening times of wild herbs and roots,” through the early agricultural societies’ celestial reckonings and their invention of calendars, to medieval man’s invention of the daily schedule (first perpetrated by the Benedictine monks) and industrial, bourgeois man’s exaltation of the clock and today’s increasing domination by a “computime” measured in nanoseconds (billionths of a second). Next, “Time Wars” comprises a cautionary jeremiad against the computer society, which compels men to interface with inhumanly rapid machines and invites them to treat reality merely in terms of proliferating information systems:

> The nanosecond culture brings with it a new and more virulent form of reductionism. The clockwork universe of the industrial age is being replaced, in fast order, by the computational universe of the post-industrial age. . . . We are entering a new temporal world where time is segmented into nanoseconds, the future is programmed in advance, nature is reconceived as bits of coded information, and paradise is viewed as a fully simulated, artificial environment.

In both these aspects, “Time Wars” seems an efficient rehash of other recent works of popular sociology and anthropology; its footnotes draw preponderantly upon books written in the nineteen-eighties (“Technostress,” by Craig Brod; “Turing’s Man,” by David Bolter; “The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit,” by Sherry Turkle; “Silicon Shock: The Menace of the Computer,” by Geoff Simons; “The Discoverers,” by Daniel Boorstin; “The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time,” by Edward T. Hall; “Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and Calendars in Social Life,” by Eviatar Zerubavel; “The

Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918," by Stephen Kern; "Clocks and the Cosmos," by Samuel L. Macey; "The Information Society," by Yoneji Masuda), and even when an older voice is quoted (Augustine, Swift, the Welsh bard Dafydd ap Gwilym) the notes give the source as an intermediate scholarly work.

A personal and original note sounds only in "Time Wars" ' third aspect, that of a sermon urging us to return to biological time, and dwell empathetically in the global ecosystem. There is on all fronts, we are assured, a surge in this direction; there are "the environmental movement, the animal-rights movement, the Judeo-Christian stewardship movement, the eco-feminist movement, the holistic health movement, the alternative agriculture movement, the appropriate technology movement, the bio-regionalism movement, the self-sufficiency movement, the economic democracy movement, the alternative education movement, and the disarmament movement." Without denying that every little movement has a praiseworthy meaning all its own, I find it hard to grasp how all this New Age pietism relates to the concept of time that the computer has allegedly drilled into our heads. I use a word processor, and the appearance on the screen of the letter I just tapped seems no more or less miraculous and sinister than its old-fashioned appearance, after a similar action, upon a sheet of white paper in my typewriter. Has the fact that this electronic machine is designed in terms of nanoseconds affected my consciousness any more deeply than the minute calculations involved in the design of the gasoline carburetor that, when I simplemindedly ask my automobile to go, ignites and does go? The capacity of human beings to absorb what they wish to and to ignore the rest seems to me almost illimitable. The telephone, for instance, is a still evolving technological marvel, and more pervasive than the computer: has it changed what people talk about? Not according to the television commercials urging us to reach out to sweetheart and mother. Television itself came heralded as the reshaper of global culture, and yet its staple content remains the primitive stuff of sporting events, shoot-'em-ups, car chases, and comedies as homely and inane as the plays we used to watch in high-school assemblies in the hoary days of Harry Truman.

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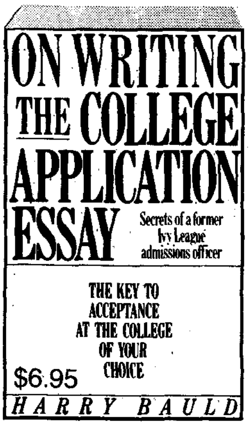
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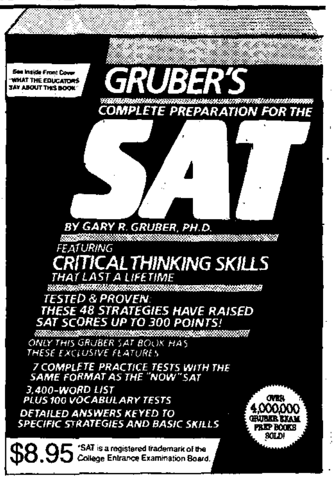
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"technostress" when computers replace older hardware, and quotes some "computer compulsives" and M.I.T. students who have acquired rather people-unfriendly attitudes, and discusses the spread of the "information" metaphor in such sciences as biology, psychology, and even astronomy. He did not prove, to me, that the computer as a culture-altering device is yet in the same league as the clock, the wheel, or the plow, or that its theorists will have the cultural impact of Newton, Darwin, Einstein, or Freud. A fever of overstatement heats up many a sentence:

> It [the spiral] is the new symbol of creation captured in both the double helix and in the cybernetic vision where feedback loops simulate new worlds pulsing in the crevices of millions of silicon chips.

Rifkin's leaps into the cosmic sometimes leave us behind:

> The new universe resembles a giant computerlike mind, ever expanding, creating new information and new knowledge, filling the cosmos with higher and higher levels of consciousness.... Human beings reach out to this new informational deity by interfacing with the evolving mind of the universe. Communion is the experience of gaining access to larger and larger stores of information, of simulating more complex programs, each reaching ever closer to the ultimate computerbank storage facility, the mind force of the cosmos.

Even on the more solid ground of the past, his prose overreaches:

> In just a few short centuries, the bourgeois class had managed to hoist the mechanical clock to the top of the town tower and then succeed in lifting its spirit up into the heavens where, like the angel Gabriel, it proclaimed the coming of the kingdom. The promised land, however, bore a strikingly secular imprint. God's countenance, which once shone brightly, now cast only a pale shadow. The sounds of divine rapture could no longer be heard. They were subsumed by the relentless ticking of the giant cosmic clock. Underneath its watchful gaze, the faithful scurried to and fro, frantic to keep up with the tempo of the times, anxious not to miss a single beat for fear that they might be forever condemned to that netherworld where no clocks existed and mayhem and confusion reigned supreme.

The torments of Hell, we learn for the first time, include the annoyance of not knowing what time it is.

That the clock was needed to regulate the factories and appointment books of industrialism, and that the calendar, with its religious and state holidays, is a prime enforcer of the prevailing culture, I do not doubt, and Rifkin's details on these matters (and on the remarkable biological clocks of insects and animals) repay the reading of "Time Wars." But the computer, unlike the calendar and the clock, does not mark (or "keep") time; it and its programmers seek to minimize time. It is a timesaving device, meant to save clerical labor as its predecessor mechanisms saved physical labor, and as such it is the friend, not the enemy, of the biology-attuned slowdown Rifkin prescribes. He hymns "the new empathetic movements" that are "committed to the establishment of a social time order that is compatible with and complementary to the natural time order" without asking what the natural time order entails for most human beings. No workday is longer or harder than that of the agricultural worker, and any who think the hunter-gatherer led the life of Riley should read this year's brilliant neolithic novel, Elizabeth Marshall Thomas's "Reindeer Moon." The most ringing quotation in "Time Wars" comes from John Locke: "The negation of Nature is the way toward happiness." Selective and tactful negation, let's hope, but there is no turning back, against time's arrow. —JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

INDIAN COUNTRY, by Philip Caputo (Bantam; $18.95). This extraordinary novel has its beginning and its end in an idyllic corner of the great woods that make up most of the upper peninsula of Michigan. Christian Starkmann, the central figure, is the son of a rigid, charismatic, left-wing Lutheran preacher comfortably settled in a Chicago suburb. The Vietnam War looms, and Starkmann, though safe, in obedience to his father's wishes, in divinity school, is driven by his conscience to enlist. He survives the war and returns home to an unforgiving father. He retreats to the woods. He marries, fathers a daughter, gets a job as a timber cruiser. His wife is loving and capable, he loves his daughter, he likes his job and does it well. But the war is still with him. Certain moments of action—crouching in a foxhole under mortar fire and a misdirected deluge of napalm—begin to recur in his dreams. The war comes closer and closer, it invades his daily life, it distorts his marriage. We watch his descent in a fascination, a transfixion.

THE OLD CAPITAL, by Yasunari Kawabata, translated from the Japanese by J. Martin Holman (North Point Press; $15.95). The paintings of Paul Klee inspire a daring kimono designer in this exquisite story, set in modern-day, tradition-bound Kyoto, about the designer's adopted daughter, a foundling who discovers that she has a twin sister. The plot, such as it is, features a young obi weaver who executes a Klee-inspired pattern for one twin and a twin-inspired pattern for the other, and soon finds himself in love and confused—unsure of who is inspiring whom. Yasunari Kawabata—who wrote "The Old Capital" in 1962, won the Nobel Prize in 1968, and committed suicide in 1972—weaves in countless quintessentially Japanese motifs, from bamboo-leaf sushi and peony tofu to the Bamboo Cutting Ceremony and the Imperial Offering of Cucumbers. Suddenly, though, in the middle of all this, a Sony radio starts to chatter, and the story's elegiac, and prophetic, depth is doubled.

FLORRY OF WASHINGTON HEIGHTS, by Steve Katz (Sun & Moon; $15.95 cloth, $10.95 paper). William Swanson, lawyer, recalls his formative years as Swanny the Bullet in this unusual bildungsroman about teen gangs at war on upper Broadway around 1950. The Bullets want to settle their differences with the Fanwoods on the baseball diamond; the Fanwoods want to rumble. By the end, Swanny has good reason to liken Broadway to the boundary between North and South Korea, with Zooky's Newsstand and Confectionery (as Zooky wants the Bullets' baseball uniforms to read) respected as a sort of D.M.Z. Steve Katz, whose tenth book this is, makes some apt and amusing comments on another local boy who made good, Henry Kissinger. When Mr. Katz considers the stuff of nostalgia, from egg creams to bobby socks, he makes it as good a surprise as Zooky's "special"—a hot dog that "burst in the mouth like a peach made out of spicy meat"—must have been to someone expecting just a hot dog.

GENERAL

THE FOURTH WORLD: THE HERITAGE OF THE ARCTIC AND ITS DESTRUCTION, by Sam Hall (Knopf; $17.95). The "fourth world" of the title is made up of the vast, cold lands and seas that lie above the sixty-sixth parallel—the

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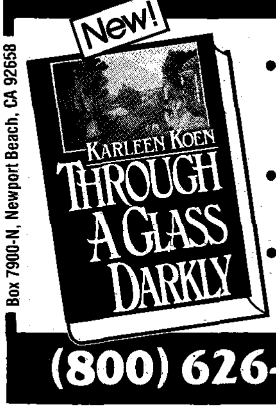

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Arctic Circle—and were once home to primitive tribes who had learned, over millennia, to wrest a living from their frozen environment by hunting, fishing, and animal husbandry. This book, by a noted British television reporter and documentary filmmaker, is at once an evocation of the past of that world and its culture, a vivid and detailed depiction of its condition today, and a projection into the near future of what is in store for not only the ecology and the people of the Arctic but the whole planet if what is now happening in the North is allowed to continue. With an impressive deployment of facts, statistics, and scientific testimony, Mr. Hall paints an appalling picture of the ruthless and reckless exploitation by the white man—European, American, and Soviet—of the riches of the Arctic over the last hundred years, and he itemizes the measures that will have to be taken, beginning almost immediately, by governments, corporations, and short-term exploiters of every kind to avert global tragedy.

Showdown at Gucci Gulch: Lawmakers, Lobbyists, and the Unlikely Triumph of Tax Reform, by Jeffrey H. Birnbaum and Alan S. Murray, with an introduction by Albert R. Hunt (Random House; $18.95). An animated account of the two-year (1984-86) struggle for what ultimately became "the most sweeping overhaul of the tax code in the nation's history." The details of the story are complex—they include economics, finance, statistics, political procedures, and personal negotiations—but its outline is simple: once the President had committed the Administration to tax reform, the Democrats decided they dared not leave it to the Republicans. The authors, two *Wall Street Journal* reporters, do not pretend to foretell the long-term effects of the new tax code on the nation's economy, but they have no doubt that it is a triumph of principle—the old code's loopholes were generous to the rich at the expense of the poor—as well as of the art of politics.

History and Utopia, by E. M. Cioran, translated from the French by Richard Howard (Seaver/Holt; $16.95). Six elegant essays in disenchantment. The author, who was born in Rumania (in 1911) and has lived in Paris since 1937, writes with a refinement that helps explain his pervasive disillusion. Cioran associates nicety with decadence and weakness; he thinks of vitality as vulgar, aggressive, and unreflective. He believes that human beings seek power and revenge, and finds that modern societies in which these desires are controlled are condemned to "mediocrity" and "impotence." One can think of Cioran as an intellectual grandson of Carlyle and Nietzsche; he shares their rejections and admirations but, lacking their nineteenth-century energy and optimism, settles for ironic discomfort. The translation is excellent.

Passionate Pilgrims: English Travelers to the World of the Desert Arabs, by James C. Simmons (Morrow; $19.95). A popular recountal of the European discovery of the Middle East which began, rather rudely, with Napoleon's conquest of Egypt, in 1798. The story is told here in terms of a handful of English men and women —most of them Victorians—who ventured into often forbidden Arab lands to satisfy their various compulsions. There was the formidable and slightly sinister Sir Richard Burton, who made the hazardous journey to Mecca disguised as a Muslim; Lady Hester Stanhope, who was "six feet tall and rode a stallion as skillfully as any officer of the king's cavalry," and set herself up, and was accepted, as "Queen of the Arabs" in a mountaintop palace in Lebanon; Charles Montagu Doughty, author of the wonderful "Travels in Arabia Deserta;" the romantically obsessed Lady Jane Digby; and, finally, T. E. Lawrence, the champion of Arab independence. Mr. Simmons' book is entertainingly written, and its supplementary scholarship, on things like the Suez Canal and the importance of the horse in pre-petrodollar Arab civilization, is solid. Illustrations.

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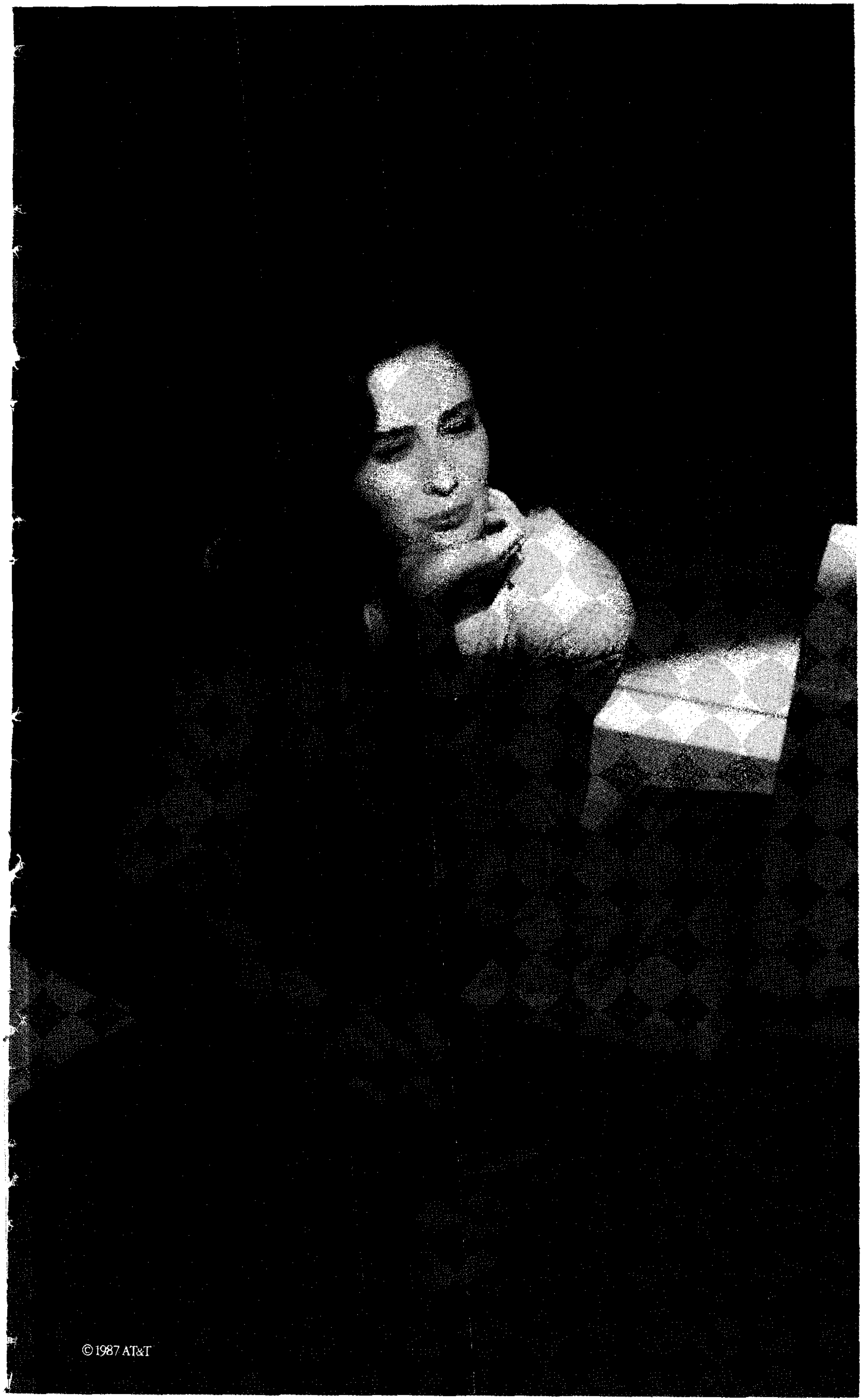
CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Sheriff's Report in the Millerton (N.Y.) News*]

Deputy Cahill investigated a criminal mischief report at the Ruth Ward residence at the Berkshire Apartments in Wassaic on June 27 at 9:21 A.M.

According to deputies, Ward said that sometime during the night unknown persons put a large amount of mashed potatoes on top of her parked car.

"Big presentation tomorrow... three weeks of hard work... I sure wouldn't mind talking to the one person who understands how important this is to me."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